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FAITH AND SUCCESS

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Faith and Success

By

Basil King

Author of
"The Conquest of Fear"

How "Success by contribution" —not "Success by acquisition"—may become an aim.

Garden City, New York
Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.
1929

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FAITH AND SUCCESS

FAITH AND SUCCESS

CHAPTER I

FAITH AND OUR COMMON NEEDS

I

IF I am to write on Faith in its relation to Success I must do so out of my own experience. Where one's experience is small the task becomes a daring one. In any case, it must be one which no sane man would ever undertake of his own accord or without the urging of some friendly authority.

In yielding to this persuasion I am fully aware that to connect Success with oneself, as if one had attained to it, may easily strike the reader as presumptuous, pitiful, or ridiculous. This I must risk, hoping to show the modesty of my claims as I go on.

To write from my own experience, which, like that of everybody else, has been one of many defeats and a few meagre victories, is the only course that would make my writing at all worth while. There are many much abler than I who can elaborate from theory. All that remains for me is to make a faulty record of what, in the matter of Faith and its Success, I have tried to prove as fact.

In doing this I must beg to be understood as expressing my personal opinions only. I am not attempting to teach the reader who may know more on the subject than I do. I am not asking him to agree with me. The privilege of saying that with which others will not agree is one which it is important to reëstablish. In the standardization of our national life we have been gradually taking it away from our friends and renouncing it ourselves. Of whatever differs from our own opinions we are likely to be impatient. We not only do not care to hear it, but we would, if we could, keep it from being spoken. The tendency does more than make

for intolerance: it stultifies intercourse. When ideas are expressed which we feel obliged to combat, zest comes to the intelligence. It is only then, as a rule, that we begin to think matters out, learning to know our convictions through seeking their justification.

I ask, therefore, to be allowed to speak my mind frankly, not in the spirit of assertion, but in that of discussion. The reader will, of course, be equally frank in his turn, quarrelling with my opinion if he likes, but not with me. We may thus do something to revive the art of that friendly debate, so nearly lost among us, to which each contributes freely what he thinks, while no one loses his temper.

On my part, I shall say nothing but what I have worked out for myself, with no intention at the time of ever putting it into print.

But when I say that I have worked it out I do not mean that my ideas must for that reason be original. They come from many sources, backed by many authorities. If there is anything in them that is my own it is possibly the

use I make of them, though even that may be but the echo of what I have heard from others. All I can do in response to the request that has been made of me is to state as simply as I can what, to my own satisfaction, I have proved to be the relation of Faith to Success, the dependence of Success upon Faith, and leave the matter there.

II

This I take to be urgent on the part of any one who has given to the subject any thought at all, for the reason that Faith has become so difficult. Most of us are impressed by the fact that of the generations of young men and women who grow up in the Churches so many come to an age at which the Faith they attempted to profess drops away from them. I do not exaggerate when I say that within my own observation there must have been some thousands, now mostly in their prime, brought up in one or another of the Churches, who now never enter a church door unless it be for a wedding or a funeral.

I speak here chiefly of the Protestant Churches. Of the Roman Catholic Church I have had no opportunity of judging, except in France. But the loss of Faith used to be common enough there. Of the many Frenchmen I knew more or less intimately up to the years just before the war, not one, as far as I remember, ever went to confession or to mass, or acknowledged himself a Catholic otherwise than with an amusing grimace or a shrug of the shoulders.

And of those who fell away from Faith the remarkable fact was that, as far as one could judge from externals, it did not do them any harm. Some went morally wrong, but so did some who remained within the Churches. Common experience will, I think, bear me out in saying that of those who renounce Faith the majority are men of high integrity, upright, industrious, kindly, taking an honourable part as citizens. That they have lost anything is not superficially apparent. Faith has been forsaken and has not been missed.

As nearly as I can now recall, this was my

first perplexity on the subject of keeping the Faith and giving it up. I could not see that those who kept it were any the better, or those who gave it up any the worse, for doing so. Taught that it would make a difference in another life, if it made none in this, I was dissatisfied with the explanation. The first test, after all, is here; and if here the loss can be so little damaging to character and conduct, it is hard to see why it should be more so in another world.

The suspicion that the Faith in which I had been trained and to which I continued to adhere was a sort of fungous growth on life troubled me during years of my early adult life. Its action seemed to pass in a world which touched the real world but remotely. What I may call the more sophisticated Churches struck one as dry and conventional; the simpler as ignorant and hysterical. All, it seemed to me, made promises which they could not or did not keep. That of Grace was one of them and will serve as an illustration. Grace, as I understood the word, and still understand it, is an inflowing

spiritual power which gives a man strength beyond anything he himself can generate. There were "means of grace"—prayer, penitence, sacraments—which brought you this power with special increase of energy.

But the practical difficulty lay in the fact that those who made use of these "means of grace" were, as far as one could observe, in no way superior to those who did not. A generalization of this kind is, of course, a venture in the dark, but I speak from the point of view from which we commonly appraise our neighbours and ourselves. No one who knows the world would begin, I imagine, to declare that those who carry out all the rules of their Churches show any advantages over those who do not. They are not easier to live with, not more trustworthy in business, not more charitable socially. The "means of grace," so rich in promises, seemed to me uncertain in fulfilment, if they fulfilled anything whatever. Faith existed in words. Apart from words it left little that I could find, at that time in my life, on which one could depend.

And if I cite myself so much it is only because I may be taken as a sample of hundreds of thousands who within the past two generations have had the same misgivings as myself. They have not been the frivolous or the vicious, but the more seriously minded. If Faith had value, they were the ones who might have been expected to discover it. Not only did they give up the attempt, but they gave it up with an ease as natural as growing. In my many conversations on this subject I can hardly recall any one who said he was sorry to let Faith go. It merely slipped away from him as something of which he had no need.

And if people had no need of it, it was because it had been of so little help to them. No one parts willingly with that which he has found useful. This ease of dismissal has been to me perhaps the most distressing detail in the whole history of the decline of Faith, as far as I have been able to study it. That there is here and there an individual who loses his Faith with regret is, of course, a fact; but in the majority of

cases Faith passes as childhood passes, or drops off like a thing outworn. Had it been of practical use those who had had it would have clung to it. That they could watch it vanish and feel no pang was to me at least an appalling proof of its futility.

III

In my own case I came to a time when my Faith was, as it were, in suspense. Neither denying it nor affirming it I allowed it to remain indeterminate. This, too, I think, is a common state of mind, especially within the Churches.

One could doubtless count by the million those who do not see how to accept the principle of Faith, and yet are unwilling to relinquish it. In their unformulated creeds the most positive statement would probably be that in Faith there may be something, though they have not found out what it is. They keep it like the talent wrapped up in a napkin because they do not know what else to do with it. Listening to sermons, turning the pages of the Bible, thinking as they

must from time to time of the tenets of their Churches, they are mildly bewildered. At the same time they are content to wait for the solving of their mysteries till some power outside themselves undertakes the task. Faith has not been so notable an aid that they are impatient to know more of it. It is enough that it should be kept in its napkin in case they should ever feel the impulse to take it out and examine it.

It was during the years when I was in this state of mind that the first suggestion came to me that I can call constructive. It was a startling thought, not very definite or clear, but a little harsh and disturbing.

I have heard it related by one who assisted when Graham Bell was inventing the telephone that after long experimenting the first indication of responsive sound was a clatter or a scratch. Then came semi-articulate syllables; then isolated words; then brief sentences; then conversations. But the clatter, the scratch was the beginning.

And something like it was that thought, which

I at once put away from me as impious toward those whom I revered, but which later became the point of departure of a new life of Faith. It struck me at first as an unworthy thought because it seemed to put the blame for my spiritual inefficiency on those who had taught me instead of on myself. Not till I could exonerate them did I feel at liberty to follow the new leading.

IV

It was summer time at Ascot in England. Ascot, after its famous Race Week, sinks into the sweet somnolence which stamps the English countryside. A region of wild heaths, purple with ling and yellow with gorse, it is also one of deep and ancient forests, where the bracken grows breast-high and the deer roam freely. More than that it was, especially in days before the motor car and the war, a haunt of tradition, national, social, religious. The foundations of life were stable and assured. You didn't question them. You didn't turn them upside down to see if they had been well and truly laid. You

were sure of them. You *knew*. The certainty gave you tranquillity of mind.

But this I could not have. Unlike those who were willing to shelve the question of Faith till it solved itself, I brooded over the seeming uselessness of what was apparently meant to be the most dynamic force in the world. This uselessness made me unhappy. In long solitary walks, over the Heath still as untamed as in the days of Jack Shepherd, or into the forests secular, cool, and still, I turned round and round in the troublous subject, never arriving anywhere. Then one day, when to the best of my recollection I was thinking of something else, the suggestion came which has since that time become to me a bit of illumination.

A bit of illumination was not unneeded in that I was consciously at a turning point. During a holiday from work I was debating the question as to whether I should be loyal to a religion which seemed ineffective or give it up. To give it up would have been in some ways a relief

and in others an inner tragedy. In the sense of no longer striving after the chimerical the relief would have been keen. The breaking with a great tradition, on the other hand, could not but have left me desolate. What I cared for more than anything was to retain such religion as I understood, but in order to do that I must find Faith more productive of practical return.

Wandering one day in Swinley Forest I came on that stately avenue which, beginning at no highway and ending at no objective point, once led to a hunting lodge belonging to King John. Cutting the forest mysteriously, its bed is a pavement of bluebells and lady-fern, or of wild hyacinths in spring. Into this majestic way so few ever penetrate nowadays that the deer in the bracken raised inquisitive heads as I passed along, while pheasant and partridge rose from their feeding with a startled whirr of wings. Then suddenly, as irrelevant to anything I was thinking as the avenue itself to the goings and

comings of human feet, sprang the suggestion that if we were dissatisfied with Faith it was because we didn't know what it was. We had not been made to understand it. Either it had been presented to us badly, or it had been misapprehended by ourselves. While both might be true, the fact that we were putting in the place of Faith an invention of our own was the outstanding one. Instead of profiting by Faith we were letting its force escape us.

The idea was repellent to both my affections and my self-esteem. For those who had taught me in childhood and youth I had every reason to feel reverence. That their teaching had been inadequate I could neither consider nor admit. Equally impossible I found the supposition that what I had hitherto tried to practise as Faith was not Faith as it was known to the Nazarene Master in the New Testament. Though I could contemplate throwing it over, I could not believe that my conception of it had been wrong. Slow to move from this position, trial alone compelled me to abandon it.

v

That is, I reached a place where a Faith that would do something for me here and now became imperative.

And when I say something for me here and now I mean in the way of meeting those daily cares which are always the most pressing. Every one knows what they are, for everyone has, at some time in his life, been obliged to shoulder them. Compelled to shoulder them more actively than had hitherto been the case with me, I turned to my Faith for help and found little that descended to my needs.

My needs were too earthly. They were too material. Urgent as they were, a matter of life and death to me, such Faith as I understood could not concern itself with things so commonplace. Its inspiration was absorbed by the eternal. On the Nature of God, on the Trinity, on the Incarnation, on the mystery known as Salvation, it could be eloquent; but when it came to such questions as the making of a liv-

ing, the finding of a job, the supporting of a family, it had hardly anything to say. I do not mean that it had nothing. It had a few generalities: God would provide; manna would fall in the wilderness; the righteous would not be forsaken. But there was no system that I ever heard of by which Faith could be utilized as a means of getting daily bread.

I venture to emphasize daily bread—a phrase which covers, of course, all the support of our temporal life—for the reason that it must of necessity stand in the forefront of all our preoccupations. To secure daily bread for himself and those who belong to him—for those who belong to him even more than for himself—is the duty to which every responsible person wakes up every day. It is with him through every hour. He does not get away from it when his day's work is done. There is no call just like it, none that demands so much suppression of the evil self, so much self-discipline, so much self-forgetfulness. The young man who saves his money, marries, has children for whom he must provide, prob-

ably denies himself in ways that none but himself ever knows. The same is true of the young woman. These are but illustrations of that dependence and interdependence in which families, groups of friends, civic communities, and whole societies find themselves knit into a congeries of interests in which temporal supply is the first necessity. The rich are in it as well as the poor, the public man as well as the private man. No one being exempt from this kind of need, I claim to be right in putting it first on the list of the purposes of Faith.

The Trinity, the Incarnation, the effort to be "saved" in the life that comes after this one, are all matters of Christian importance; but they are not the ordinary man's first concern. He is willing, as a rule, to take it for granted that God is Three in One or only One, according as he happens to have been instructed. He is willing to accept the teaching that God became Man through the human Motherhood of a Virgin, if the twig of his mind has been bent that way. Salvation does not worry him. Except in mor-

bid instances, or in sects of morbid tendency, the healthy-minded man assumes that whatever is to happen after death it will not be injurious to him, and thinks little more about it. Of his work he thinks all the time. His common every-day duties are never for an instant off his mind. They are his life; they are himself, he has scarcely an existence apart from them.

This being so with myself, my appeal to Faith, as I then understood it, was to something beside the mark. Carrying my burdens into a church, I carried them into a world where the aims were as far from my needs as poetry is far from political economy. It was a specialized world, of hymns and prayers and sacraments, devotional, ecclesiastical, often beautiful, but revolving like another planet, within sight of our own, yet not touching it.

Pondering over this aloofness it struck me as due chiefly to the fact that religion introduces us to Faith not at its beginning but at a point far on in spiritual experience. It was as if in a child's study of mathematics he began with the

differential calculus instead of with the simple rule that two and two make four. With little or nothing to lead us by degrees, we were plunged into Faith where it was most abstruse. For the demands it made on us we had no education, no preparation. We took it all at once, by a mighty act of will, or we did not take it at all.

It stood to reason, then, that when it came to our commonest and most vital problems, this sort of Faith had no answer. But a Faith that did have an answer being what I was eager for, I looked about me in life to see if I could not find it.

VI

In this attempt I received little direct help from any theology or any philosophy. Only to one great spiritual genius of the 19th Century do I feel obliged to acknowledge my indebtedness. Most of the assumptions with regard to Faith which I had learned from teachers of religion I was compelled to abandon in the course of time.

In the main, they amounted to the definition that Faith is the acceptance as true of that which we cannot prove to be true, and this, for me, was too far beyond reason. It was more, it seemed to me, than any religion had a right to ask. What we cannot prove to be true, or highly probable, at least, we should not, I thought, exact as an article of Faith. The foundations of Faith must be solid. The stages of its growth must be sure. It should avoid speculation and leaping in the dark. Speculation is uncertain and leaping in the dark can easily involve the preposterous. Faith should move by a process of induction. Because this is true, then that is likely to be true, and should be put to the test.

The only test I could think of was the practical. Because this has yielded results, then that should yield even better results. If there are no results there must be an error in the premises. If there is an error in the premises the next step is to go back and discover what it is. A Faith that will *work* must be the Faith that is rightly

directed. A Faith that is satisfied with beliefs, aiming at no practical results and obtaining none, is either wrong from the start or wrong in its application. Results will prove which. Faith may be tested through the single condition of achievement.

In this conviction I felt myself fortified by the fact that it seemed to be the principle of the Old and New Testaments. Of Faith as it appears in both of these volumes I shall have more to say later. For the minute I wish only to stress the point that to Jesus of Nazareth it was not a matter of creedal affirmation but of *doing*. His only statements with regard to Faith are of what it could effect, and to that he puts no limits. It could remove a mountain; it could uproot a tree and replant it in the ocean. It was a force. It was as nearly as may be an almighty force. Of its working, for those who accept the New Testament as it stands, He gives abundant illustration. Further than that, He declares that those with sufficient Faith shall not onlydo such works as He Himself performs,

but shall do even greater. The force is there. It is only a question of finding it.

To find it, then, was one of the ambitions with which, little by little, my inner life became charged. I could find it, of course, only on the humble scale of one who comes to the task relatively faithless and has to feel his way. The best I could do was to begin at the beginning, using my sordid and prosaic needs for the purpose of experiment, and so going on. That I should have accomplished much will hardly be expected. But what I did to my own satisfaction—I am far from saying that it would be to that of anybody else—was to discover a principle on which Faith could be established. By discovery I mean discovery only for myself. The principle is probably well known to all spiritual thinkers; it was only unknown to me. But once having found it, it seemed to me that I heard the clatter and the scratch which rejoiced the heart of the great scientist.

CHAPTER II

OUR COMMON NEEDS AND GOD'S WAY OF MEETING THEM

I

UP TO the present I have used the word Faith somewhat loosely. It has a variety of meanings, and between them I have not distinguished. An authoritative dictionary divides these meanings under as many as six headings, each with its subdivisions. For the purpose of this book I shall take the word henceforth chiefly in its sense of Faith in an Almighty Power, which is Love, Intelligence, and Goodness. Even this must be further defined, and I shall make the definition indirectly in pointing out the difference between Faith and Trust.

Trust I understand as a passive state of con-

fidence in God. Trust believes and rests. Its verbal root is the primitive word for comfort. In comfort and assurance Trust can take its ease.

This is not to diminish its spiritual value. Trust in God of necessity implies confidence in God; and in confidence in God comfort, assurance, ease, and rest are sanctified matters of course. But of our relation to the Father they represent the reposeful side. They can be inactive. Trust can be Trust and never go beyond a serene and smiling certainty.

Faith covers all the ground of Trust, but it covers more. It is not content to rest in confidence. To do, to aspire, to scale heights are the motives of its being. It begins its mission where that of Trust leaves off. Trust is satisfied. Faith is moved by divine discontent. It seeks; it asks; it strives. To work is its prime impulse. Faith without works, according to St. James, is dead. It is not Faith. It is not even Trust. It is nothing. To exist at all Faith must prove its force by doing.

And this doing must be linked with the Divine. It depends on the Divine. Its aim is to coöperate with God. In this coöperation it starts with one or two basic principles.

II

Of these the first and the most important is the conviction of God's Almighty Goodwill toward the world and the individual. It is also the most difficult for the average mind to admit, since it seems to be contradicted by experience. Everyone knows the complaint of the man who feels that his Faith has been deceived. "I believed; I trusted; I had Faith. I prayed that the calamity would not overtake me. I was sure that I should escape it. But it came. God failed to protect me when I was confident He would." This charge is familiar. Something similar would probably spring out of the hearts of most of us. To clear the ground for the foundation stone of Faith it is imperative to know to what degree God can be trusted, or whether or not we can trust Him at all.

III

In the first place we must understand that the quality of our Faith can be tested by the habit of mind which it develops. This habit of mind is of the first importance. On it depends our attitude toward God, and on our attitude toward God depends our ability to get results.

This last is a point rarely evident to those who hope for answers to prayer or interventions of Providence. They think of God as of One Who gives or withholds, Who acts or does not act, according to some mysterious law which we are unable to grasp. That He always gives, that He always acts, is a fact we are slow to acknowledge. That when we fail to obtain the longed-for benefit the flaw is in ourselves we cannot or will not confess. And yet, if a pipe which is fed from a cistern be displaced by force or storm, it is not because the cistern refuses to supply that the pipe ceases to be filled. The blame must be put on the lack of adjustment, and the blame for the lack of adjustment on

causes farther back. So our lives get disconnected with the infinite source of supply. The good fails to reach us because of a dislocation which impedes the flow of blessing.

When prayers are not answered, when good things sorely needed do not come, the cause of this dislocation is the first thing to seek and to remove. But in our ordinary thought and conduct it is the last. Generally speaking, we think ourselves all right, and God all wrong, If we would not venture to say that, at least in the depths of our hearts we think Him an erratic God, pouring out on us what we do not ask for and denying us what we crave. It is *He* who does not answer prayer; it is *He* who refuses us. If He chose He could deliver us from bereavement, want, and care; and yet He allows them all to overwhelm us. It is always the cistern that bewilders us. We rarely give a thought to the maladjustment of the pipe.

To me it was a helpful discovery to learn that God was for ever offering the fullness of His abundance, and that what I received depended

on my own ability to take. If I received little it was not because He held it back, but because the connecting channel had been displaced or choked. Whether my prayers were answered, or whether I obtained the blessings I desired, thus depended upon *me*.

The idea was scarcely credible, and yet I found it comforting. It absolved God. It gave Him to the world as trustworthy to the uttermost. As the source and support and background of life He was sure. To have something sure in a world where nearly everything else is uncertain gave you a sense of foundational stability. You were not entirely the victim of guess and speculation, floundering in the dark. You were not driven to swallowing the easy explanation that He saw that what you wanted was not good for you, and therefore He refused it. Merely to be rid of that, with its exasperating fluency, was something of a boon. You were no longer obliged to listen to the promise, "Ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you," and then hear it hedged

about with all kinds of peradventures. You knew that whatever else failed you, God's loving generosity would not. If for the minute you could grasp it only in part, or hardly grasp it at all, it nevertheless was there. To be convinced of that made the earth more solid beneath you.

IV

The question rises here as to how the pipe becomes disconnected and the channel choked. If God is pouring out in profusion, it should surely be easy for us to catch a portion of such vast beneficence.

It *is* easy, and we do.

The channel is never so blocked that something does not come through it; the pipe is never so fatally awry that the cistern cannot overflow into it in some degree. The innumerable good things which come to us and constitute our maintenance are proof enough of that. Food, clothing, shelter, education, income, reach every one of us. To some they come in abundance;

to others they are doled out scantily; but few fail to grasp the essential. Even for those who do not grasp the essential some poor provision will be made, so that there will be no positive necessity for any one to die of exposure or neglect.

And all this, whether in greater measure or in smaller, is what we are able to seize of God's boundless munificence. In the effort to understand God it must be a basic fact that His munificence is the same to everyone. Being what He is He could not make a difference between His children, willing one to be rich and another poor, one singled out for the large opportunity while another is crushed between burdens. The dominion over nature which He gave to man was not limited to a few. It was the inheritance of all.

How, then, does it come about that a distribution meant to be equal should in practice be so unjust? How is it that some of us in greatest need should get so little of our share? Even when we pray for it, hungrily, desperately, why

do we often fail to obtain anything whatever in the way of a response? If God could be defined as Almighty, All-loving, Ever-present Abundance, how does it happen that there is want at all? How does it happen that there is so much misery of every kind in a world which, had He but willed it, could have been so blest?

These are the questions we are all asking, and to which a reasonable answer has become imperative. The old explanation satisfies no longer. No longer are we content to be told that God so wished it, and because He so wished it we dare not inquire further. From our modern point of view that is to paint Him as a hateful God, bringing helpless creatures into a world of sorrow in order to make sport of them. We must be allowed to see Him as justifying, without too many inconsistencies, the character of Good with which we are eager to endow Him. Of efforts to explain these inconsistencies away we have grown a little weary. A God not so difficult to comprehend as He has been made to

seem to us is possibly what we long for more than we long for anything else in the world.

V

Perhaps a crude illustration will help me to make clearer what I conceive to be the relation of God to the individual, and of the individual to God.

Suppose we stood on the edge of a rich land, little explored, and almost uninhabited. It has coal and gold and iron and oil; it is fertile in all that the earth can produce; it is suave in climate, and lovely with the beauty of forest, mountain, and sea. If this land were given us for our occupation we should know that prosperity, health, and probably much happiness awaited us. But we should also know that few of the good things the new home would yield could be ours without work. Potentially everything is there; but it must be won. The metals must be mined; the oil must be drawn; the forests must be felled; the fields must be tilled; the orchards must be planted. The most teeming land

will not give up its resources for the asking. They must be toiled for. They must be toiled for with some degree of knowledge of the end in view. There are ways to be followed; there are rules to be observed. The same methods will not give us iron and oil and oranges. Each has its own system of approach.

It is somewhat in this way that I myself have come to think of God, though this would not be all I think of Him. But speaking only from the point of view of longing, of supply, of prayer, I see myself as set in the midst of a vast spiritual land, out of which not only all I need can come to me, but all I desire as well. From the permanent spiritual reality it can be transmuted for my sake into the mental, material, or affectional terms which at present are what I can best understand. But the power of transmutation must be mine.

It must be mine in the sense that the knowledge of tilling, of mining, of forestry, must belong to the settler. I cannot expect to get spiritual blessings without work any more than

I should expect to get material ones. I cannot spend my time in dawdling by the shore and expect to find an olive orchard magically grow on my hillside. I cannot go through years of my life giving God a second or third or fourth place in my interests, or no place at all, and then in an hour of need expect to win His intervention by means of a terrified prayer. No more than slovenly culture will give us the best results from the most productive soil will it do this with God. His riches must, so to speak, be cultivated carefully. We must give time and thought and love to them. They are there for us; but only as the grain and fruit and gold are there for the colonist in a new and prolific land.

To no small extent this answers, for me at least, the riddle of want and care. If we still feel want and care it is because we have not worked for their elimination. Such work is hard and incessant. Involving as it does thinking, watching, praying, and a steady determination to do right, it is not strange that the race as a whole has shirked it. It has shirked it for

as many generations as man has been on the earth. In some respects our progress has been great; but in that which means our deliverance from the most carking of our anxieties we have scarcely advanced beyond the prehistoric.

This is the first condition which makes such emancipation difficult for the modern individual. Whatever his rebellion against ills which he thinks he does not deserve, his immemorial tradition is set against seeking the one way of relief from them. The whole race mind refuses to see God as surrounding His child with immeasurable good which Faith would show him how to use. There is no such happy state, the race mind argues; there never has been one. God is a distant mystery, not a dynamic creative force always and always and always feeding His universe out of His everlasting stores. I am not placed within Him as I am placed within the air I breathe. He does not bathe me round. Nothing in my sensuous experience reveals Him as so putting His resources at my disposal that my life on earth may be as full and blest as any

life in Heaven. Except that now and then He may grant me one of His capricious favours, all I can have is what I can scratch from the surface of this stony soil.

Of our race mind by inheritance this is the conviction. To react against it is in some ways a stupendous task. In our incipient concept of God as the open-handed Giver we are strangled into denial by what everybody thinks. Everybody thinks Him a spasmodic Giver only, governed by laws which to us are no surer than the rules of chance.

When the victim asks, Why am I so afflicted? here then is the first part of his answer. The race mind will not have it otherwise. Until within quite recent years no corporate effort had ever been made to understand God as Loving and Infinite Bounty. It is true that the effort had been made by individuals. As we shall see later there are instances of it in the Old Testament and One Supreme Example in the New. But of united action on the part of men seeking a great common aim there has been so little that

we might almost put it down as none at all. Care has been allowed its unrestricted sway. Systems of bearing it, stoic or submissive, have frequently been prescribed to us, but no method of getting rid of it from life. That it should still be part of the matter of course of existence ought not, therefore, to surprise any one. Where from immemorial time the soil has not been tilled, nettles rather than figs will be the yield even from the Promised Land.

CHAPTER III

GOD'S WAY OF MEETING THEM AND OUR WAY OF MEETING HIM

I

HAVING reached the conclusion that if I was to receive benefits I must work for them, the question arose as to what sort of work I should do. Here I was puzzled. Like most respectable churchgoers I was under the impression that I was doing already everything there was to be done. The routine seemed to cover all that could be asked for. When it came to doing more or doing differently, I was at a loss.

In the end the lead came in the way we call accidental. It was in listening to an amusing outspoken lady who in some company in which I was present was laughing at an effort she had

made to repent of her sins. "But people of my age and of my position in the world don't commit sins. It would be too shocking. All I could find were a few white lies, a few bad tempers, a few unkindnesses, a few repetitions of slander, and a few little bits of envy, which wouldn't be considered sins at all." The lady was plainly of the opinion that the only sins were the gross ones, that so long as she did not steal, or get drunk, or commit murder or adultery, she kept the moral law.

In turning this over in my mind, it struck me first as measuring up to the average person's standard. In the second place, it struck me as measuring up to my own. What I saw as wrong for myself were the big things such as everybody sees. These, as we all know, we must conquer, or let them conquer us. When I thought of the channels being choked it was such big things as these I had had in mind.

It came to me, then, that it was comparatively rare for a channel to be blocked by an avalanche of rock; it is much more frequently silted

up with sand. For perhaps the great mass of us it is not the big sins we commit which render it hard for God's beneficence to reach us: it is the multiplicity of little acts and words so light that they can be carried on the zephyr wings of small talk.

That the gravest things in life are the little things was, to my conventional way of thinking, something of a shock. A man is not stealing or murdering or getting intoxicated every minute of every day. Every minute of every day, on the other hand, he is subject to the crowding infinitesimal suasions which determine character and attitude of mind. If, therefore, we would supervise our inner selves, the effort must first be directed to the counteraction of those bacilli of conduct which we scarcely ever think of as infectious.

Starting from this point I evolved for myself a system of working toward Faith, and so working toward Success, in which there were four strains woven into one main principle. Those strains were: 1. Conduct; 2. Prayer; 3. Wor-

ship; 4. Certainty of God. On each of these points I shall want to say a few words.

But before doing that I must emphasize the fact that I evolved this system for my personal needs alone. I do not claim that it is the only method of keeping oneself open to the action of Divine Munificence. I do not claim that it is the best, or even a very good one. I am far from being a spiritual expert. Though in feeling my own way I have pondered much along spiritual lines I have read very little, and accepted almost nothing on any one else's authority. If I attempted to prescribe for others I might easily go wrong; but one runs less risk of that in prescribing for oneself. The utmost I can hope is that the plan which has worked in my case may work in that of another, especially if he can find no better one.

It is almost superfluous to add that the carrying out of my plan has been no more than partial, and even partial may be too strong a word. What I have had before me is an aim. Needless to say, I have not reached it. In no way

do I offer myself as an example beyond the fact of making an experiment. As to this it might not be too presumptuous to compare myself with the scientific student who, having made in his laboratory certain tests which do not pretend to be exhaustive, presents them to those who are working toward the same ultimate discoveries.

As a matter of fact, I have often wondered why so little personal experience in spiritual things is ever set before us by those who have gone through it. In the other great branches of activity this is not the case. In literature, in science, in politics, in music, in the theatre, and in business, biography and autobiography use all the resources of narration and psychology to show us the workings of the mind in the course of the struggle upward. Hardly any important person nowadays retires from active life, or passes from the earthly scene, without some intimate account, nearly always deeply interesting, of the processes which made him what he was. In this way, the real man is sometimes dis-

closed to us more vividly than any one was permitted to know him in the flesh.

But when we come to spiritual things it is not so. Great spiritual leaders pass away leaving scarcely a hint behind them of the doubts and conflicts, the defeats and victories, which would mean intensely much to us because they must have been like our own. Now and then, on the death of some eminent member of a church, a volume of his letters will be issued from the press, carefully chosen to reveal nothing but his outer life, while the hidden self remains unknown to us. To me it seems a pity that nearly all religious writing should be didactic. It explains or it expounds. It is ecclesiastical or scholarly. Of this we may have need. But we have even greater need of something which tells of the travail of the soul that is not scholarly, and not ecclesiastical, and that neither expounds nor explains. I can think of the published lives of prominent men in which one single account of a spiritual struggle, even if it ended in defeat, would be worth more than all their

letters on public affairs, or all their important friendships, While it is nothing half so valuable that I am writing now, yet in the immense diffidence with which I write at all it helps me when I feel that from the unimportant things I say someone may find a ray of companionship in his spiritual loneliness.

II

1. I wish I knew of some easier way by which to approach the act of Faith than the rigorous control of one's personal conduct; but I have not been able to find one. I have thought and searched, but without success. Even when it was clear to me that in the list of small failings —or failings rated small—my performance had been slack, I did not begin at once to make it any more thorough. For one thing, the task seemed too difficult. The more I considered what I thought and said and did in the course of a day the more it struck me as impossible to free the channel of the silt. Could the work have been done with a dredge it might have

looked more feasible; but in the human heart it is a matter of dealing separately with each single grain of sand. It was long, some months perhaps, before I saw that for me at least there was no choice but to make this attempt.

Even here, however, I was balked by the feeling that the opening of such a campaign, though in the depths of one's secret self, should in some way be drastic and dramatic. An elaborate undertaking, it should be approached with the silver trumpets of conscious self-dedication. There should be a solemn ritual, a sense of rising to the heroic, and I waited for that day. I was still waiting for it when I happened to hear in church one day these words from so ancient and distant a source as the Book of Deuteronomy:

"For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it. Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us and bring

it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See! I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil, in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways and to keep his commandments."

In this picturesque passage the clearest part of the meaning was the simplicity of action. In what was to be done there was nothing complicated or abstruse. There was nothing but what the average mind could easily understand, or that we were not familiar with. The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart. Any one could refuse to obey it if he chose, but not on the ground that it was beyond his intelligence.

I admit, too, that I considered the possibility of refusing this obedience. Having no Puritan blood or traditions, I had never known the tendency to introspection or self-investigation. My standards were the somewhat easy-going ones to be found in such worldly wise communions as

the Anglican and the Roman, where the touch on human infirmities is genial and light. Being strict with myself was not only irksome in advance; it was something new. The novelty made it harder to decide on a course so alien to my temperament.

What weighed on the other side were the advantages. Self-correction might lead one to Faith, and Faith might lead one to Success. Without self-correction I might have to renounce this prospect. In the same hit-or-miss way in which I had gone on I should go on in the future. There would be no sure basis on which to calculate. Religion to me, at about the age of forty, was all at sixes and sevens. Beyond a vague, blind surging toward the right I could not see what it was aiming at. If it was aiming at anything it took a strangely roundabout way in getting there. With nothing definite as an objective I should be thrown back, it seemed to me, into that welter of doctrines and ideals in which my life had never done more than drift.

But here was a prospect of getting something

for my trouble. I was not engaging on the task of self-correction merely for itself alone. No more than most people was I eager for self-correction. But it was not a question of doing something for nothing. The results were to make it worth while.

This may be called an unworthy motive, and perhaps it is. Its appeal could only have reached a man in a rudimentary spiritual stage. But that is what I was. The inducements suited to a rudimentary spiritual stage were the only ones that could have touched me. Life was at that time extremely difficult. Only God, I reasoned, could make it any easier; and for God to make it any easier I felt that I had, if I may be pardoned the expression, to make it easier for God. I must prepare the way for His goodness to reach me. I must clear the means of His access.

I well remember the accident of my taking the first small step. It was so commonplace and trivial that it is only worth the telling in the way that the first word of a book is worth the

writing down. At the same time it may serve as an illustration of the humdrum method of taking oneself in hand which for me had to be the prelude to the life of Faith.

It was one of those intimate gatherings in which it is part of the fun to discuss the peculiarities of friends. Ready with a quip that would have raised a laugh I was arrested by the thought that this was exactly one of those grains of sand which it had become my purpose to remove. With no blowing of the silver trumpets, and no solemn secret ritual whatever, I simply held my tongue. It was only the sort of thing we have all done hundreds of times when about to say something ill-natured; but the difference was that it marked for me the first little move toward an end.

After that the instances in which I could either check myself or urge myself forward, as the case might have been, naturally came thick and fast. In many I lapsed; in a few I won out. Progress has always been slow, and yet it has been progress. While I dare not claim much,

it would be graceless on my part to deny that the rewards have seemed more than to keep pace with such half-hearted efforts as I have made.

III

By adopting this course of self-correction, a correction far from heroic, I found that another difficulty which had troubled me for years dissolved of its own accord. That was on the subject of my love of God.

As everyone knows, the love of God is urged on us not only throughout the Scriptures but in all the activities of Churches. In the phraseology of which we are bidden to make use the assumption that we love Him with a genuine devotion is often distressing to the sensitive. They know that in any sense in which they understand the word love they cannot pretend to love Him; and yet to say bluntly that they do not has in their ears the ring of blasphemy. I am sure that many people go through the same perplexity on this point as for many years disturbed myself.

For me, in the end, Our Lord Himself sim-

plified the question by showing us that love for God is not of necessity an emotion. It does not of necessity resemble the love between two human beings. That it may resemble it is possible; but if we were obliged to feel an emotion before we could say that we loved God few would be able to say it. Emotions are not at our command; the love for God always is. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." That is to say, the test of love for God is not in feeling but in doing. It is safe to say that feeling as an impulse toward God should generally be distrusted. Nothing can be considered positive but the act.

In this connection I sometimes recall the words of a friend who told me once of a service he had attended in an ancient monastery far up among the Apennines. It was night. Many tapers were burning; incense hung on the air. The walls of the chapel were adorned with treasures from the hand of one of the greatest of the Italian masters, works which my friend had journeyed there to see. Affected by the soli-

tude, the unwontedness, the mystic chants, he fell on his knees and bowed his head. His words to me were: "Never before had I felt the power of religion." But what he did feel was only an emotion. Against it there might easily be a reaction as soon as the lights in the chapel were put out and he himself back in his monastic cell.

Of this we shall say a little more when we come to speak of Worship. For the present all I need add is that sensuous appreciation has little connection with our love for God, and often deflects it from its aim. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." On my part it was a genuine relief to know that my love could be tested so simply. I had only to forego unkindness, untruthfulness, ill-temper, covetousness, envy, the host of failings I was already trying to root out. The wave of sentiment stirred by the pealing of an organ through cathedral aisles or the larklike singing of a choir boy could have no value before Him. In music, in poetry, in any of the arts, the love of God finds no more than language finds in

alphabets. Its one and essential witness must be sought in what we do.

IV

2. Self-correction having become to me the first of the means by which I might prepare for a faith that would work I conceived the second to be prayer.

Prayer, in its relation to my personal needs, I have come to define as the association of the mind with God. Once more I must repeat that this definition has been made for my private use only, and might not suit another.

There was a day when I came to see that our chief, if not our only, connection with God is mental. At the same time, being mental, it is available to us at any instant. Since thought is of lightning speed we can with lightning speed be consciously in God's presence whenever we so desire. Unconsciously, of course, we are always there, but the pressure of the senses and the world makes the realization difficult. None the less, each day is full of small incidents, du-

ties, fears, temptations, pleasures, which make it natural to remember that the Everlasting Being wraps us round. This remembrance is a large part of what I understand as prayer.

It is direct and affectionate association. It is the child's spontaneous turning to the Father. In such turning there must be love.

There may be petition in it too, or, on the other hand, there may not be. It is not always the sense of something wanted which sends the thought toward the Divine. Gratitude may do it, or sorrow, or happiness, or simple contentment that God should be God, and that He should be here. Perhaps all these sentiments and more will be implied, even if not explicit. The turning itself is the essential thing, since it cannot be other than the holding out of loving hands. Words may belong to it, or they may not. With him who reads all hearts they cannot be important. Much of our purest aspiration is of necessity inarticulate. We could not phrase it. The more spiritual it is the more it will elude the clumsy device of language.

For our deepest needs language is insufficient. Because prose was inadequate we invented poetry. When poetry failed us we discovered music. But when music falls short we have only thought. Thought is, after all, our true medium of living. What we say in words, what we hammer out in acts, is but a minor part of us. Even so, it is intended to conceal as much as to reveal us. In our thoughts we are as nearly as possible our real selves. True, there are evasions there as elsewhere, and sometimes deceptions; but in the main we think as we actually are. All the drama which we dare not expose to the world outside, on which we give no more than sidelights in confidence or the confessional, is played there nakedly. As nearly as a man can be genuine at all he is genuine in what he thinks. It is there then that he turns instinctively to God, and bids Him enter.

In the Book of Revelation there are these striking words: "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him,

and he with me." The implication is that of intimacy, of something close and dear and informal. Those who sup together are, as a rule, those who have much to do with each other. To me this intercourse is prayer. It is not of necessity the asking for anything; nor is it of necessity thanksgiving. It is the flinging open of the door that the Supreme Guest may come in.

V

But the nature and method of prayer are less to our point than the answer to prayer. That is one of the main objectives Faith must keep in view. Though it brings down intercourse with God to the level of the specific request, it touches the side of the question with which the majority of us are most concerned. If I take the trouble to pray, what are my chances of being answered?

Here I must repeat as an axiom of Faith that our prayers are already answered even before being formed in thought. That must be a fixed

conviction. So long as we believe in a God Who gives or refuses according to some divine caprice our prayer is vitiated at its source. The answer being there, we have only to learn how to let it come to us.

But if I take no pains to acquire this art, how can I complain if my answer fails to reach me? This, I judge, is the question we must ask ourselves when we feel the impulse to criticize God for a lack of generosity. We cannot live for years in partial disregard of Him and then think we can get at Him with a frightened cry. We do not, of course, need "to get at Him" since He is always here; but no frightened cry is instantly going to throw open the door that we have kept closed.

I am not speaking here of the vicious and the godless. Those I have in mind are those who belong to Churches, or who, without belonging to Churches, still cling to some vague Christian belief. It is they who in time of trouble try to pray. "They ask and receive not," St. James says, "because they ask amiss." For surely it

is to ask amiss to think that in a crisis we can coax or cajole a God of Whom we scarcely think at any other time.

I have said already that Faith develops a habit of mind, and that on this habit of mind depends our ability to get results. It is a habit of mind to be in instant, constant, familiar intercourse with God. Whether we maintain this association through services and sacraments, or by the flash of mind to Mind, is to me a secondary matter so long as we maintain it. Happily, we all do maintain it to some degree, and it is this degree which measures our capacity to take. No heart, not even that of the most degraded, would seem to be absolutely shut against Him.

Well, then, wherever there is an opening, however small, His blessing forces its way in. But the blessing cannot be otherwise than in proportion to the opening. Those who have corrected their failings to some extent, and to some extent turn toward God, will receive to precisely that extent. We obtain what we are ready for.

If we are ready for little, little comes to us; if for more, we get it. It is a question of our spiritual power of assimilation. On the other hand, no effort of ours is thrown away. Every grain of silt removed opens up our lives, in proportion to its magnitude, to the inflow of beneficence.

This, then, is answer to prayer as I am able to see it. God gives all; we take as we are able. But our ability to take depends upon ourselves. We can have it in greater measure or in less according as we work for it. The first stages of that work I have tried to indicate as self-correction and habitual intercourse with God.

VI

3. The next step toward a working faith I came to understand as Worship.

Because Worship is free from self-seeking it is probably the purest impulse of the human heart. Primarily, it means the recognition on our parts of the worth of someone else. Of that the result is a spontaneous offering of honour.

Whatever is given is given to the person honoured, with nothing reserved for ourselves.

Till within a few generations the word was not so exclusively reserved for the honour of God as it is to-day. It could be applied to men, and often was. Of that the honorific term, "Your Worship," as used to a magistrate, is a well-known survival. Other examples will be found throughout our older literature, but to-day the concept of worship is in general kept for the Divine.

There it is intensified. Honour becomes adoration; respect is lifted into praise. The more fully we realize the beauty and kindness of God the more eager must be the urge to acclaim Him. It is a fact that with all our shortcomings love and graciousness never leave us cold. It is only because we credit the good in our lives to other agencies than God that our hearts are not always on fire with thanksgiving.

For worship must first of all be personal. It must spring from the individual. It can be wholly sincere and devoted, and yet show

nothing in the way of outward sign. The tribute is not in an outward sign but in a secret impulse. Its value is in its spontaneity. One single leap of the hidden self toward God may be worth all the burnt offerings and sacrifices ever laid on altars.

To drive home this fact is a large part of the message of the Old Testament. The idea of worship having once been apprehended, a tendency set in to wrest it from its spiritual personal significance and make it formalistic and mechanical. Personal spiritual worship was difficult. It implied self-correction; it implied the instant, constant, familiar turning toward God; it implied that use of the mind in thinking which is the last the majority of us ever want to make of it; it implied unceasing watchfulness. All this was too much to give. An easier way must be found.

It will be remembered that the finding of an easier way than the way of doing right in which to worship God was the point of departure from which the earlier peoples of the world went on to

forsaking Him altogether. An idol was not at first a kind of god in itself; it was only *something seen.* To worship Something Unseen was found too great a tax on powers which people were too indolent to exercise. Where there was an image round which they could weave garlands and sing hymns, all sorts of æsthetic instincts were brought into play, so that worship could become a form of entertainment. When, for example, during the absence of Moses on Sinai, Aaron cast jewels of gold into a furnace and made a golden calf, it is not to be supposed that he was inciting his people to abandon God. He was only giving them something to look at. It would stand for God and so make worship easy. To worship abstract Power, Love, and Mercy was too hard for them. For him as for them it was more direct to have something concrete and glittering that would please the eye.

Those who did not go to this extreme found other substitutes for the tribute of the heart. In the various offerings prescribed by Temple

usage, in the national feasts and fasts, these substitutes were at hand. Nothing was simpler than to make ceremonial take the place of a careful guard upon oneself. When the ritual was observed you had done everything. You paid for your sacrifice; you threw your incense on the fire; you were strict in your ablutions. This was your worship and you stopped there. You stopped there because, as the best was reckoned, you had given of your best. When you had spent your money and your time you had done all that any one could ask of you. The religious conventions being satisfied, God must be satisfied too.

But that God was not satisfied is the cry of the greatest of the psalmists and the prophets. Though they ascribe to Him, according to the verbal methods of the time, resentments and refusals such as would be natural to men, it is not difficult for us to understand that such futile observances did not reach Him at all. Doing nothing for the soul, offering nothing from the soul, they spent themselves on the air.

Allowing for a verbal usage in which God is supposed to be racked with human passion we find the whole argument summed up in the dramatic and disdainful passage in which Isaiah first appears before his people.

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts. I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me who hath required *this* at your hand? . . . Bring no more vain oblations. Incense is an abomination unto me. . . . Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth. . . . When ye spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you. When ye make many prayers I will not hear. . . . ." If they wished to get answers to their prayers there was a way. "Wash ye; make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed; be just to the fatherless; plead for the widow.

. . . If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land."

This is the essence and epitome of worship, the effort to be worthy. We should not lose sight of the fact that the two great aspects of worship are just these: First, the recognition of God's worthiness on our part; and second, the endeavour to make our recognition of more value through worthiness of our own. Merely to recognize God's worthiness is not enough. The breath of the song is in the "Cease to do evil; learn to do well," with the endless variants on the theme. That man has truly worshipped God who does his best to cleanse his life even if he never sings a hymn.

VII

For I often wonder if that system of Divine Worship which has dotted the surface of Europe, America, Australasia, and some other continents, with steeples and towers is not a repetition of the easy method which the ancients found in their burnt offerings. When in a church I watch the

ritual, or join in the singing, or listen to a sermon which at best says no more than what everybody knows already, I often hear the question, "When ye come to appear before me who hath required *this* at your hand? Bring no more vain oblations!" In other words, it sometimes seems to me that a vast amount of trouble is taken, a vast amount of money is spent, to elude the necessity for truly doing right, and that our churches lend themselves with marvellous accord to Aaron's method of giving the people something with which to entertain themselves.

One church becomes famous for its music, another for its preaching, another for its picturesque ceremonial. The appeal is frankly to the senses or the intellect. There is something to listen to and look at. It is a kind of performance which the faithful can criticize or commend, as the case may be, in making their way homeward. The singing has been good or it has been out of tune; the preacher has been magnetic or he has been dull. The performance

is the thing; the faithful are in the position of spectators; choir and clergy alike, to a very considerable degree, feel themselves in a position much like that of public entertainers.

Take, for example, the selection of a choir. The members are chosen, of course, because of their voices. But as to the meaning of what they are to sing it would be rare if a word was ever said to them. They are of any religion or of no religion; except in a minority of cases they sing only because they are paid for it. That they should be paid is a fact to which no reasonable person could object, but it can hardly be denied that in nearly all churches in which music is a "feature" the choir is on a commercial basis and on no other. As paid worshippers they resemble the hired mourners through whom certain peoples express grief. Surely their elaborate efforts, in which it is difficult to catch any conscious motive but that of pleasing the congregation, must often rank no higher than the vain oblations of three thousand years ago.

I am reminded here of a mediæval legend which is right to the point. In a small monastery of aged monks there was no one who could sing. The best they could do was a cracked and lamentable croaking. Nevertheless, though they read all their psalms and hymns, when it came to the *Magnificat*, the song of the Blessed Virgin, they did their best to raise a chant, their best being painful. But one Christmas Eve there appeared at the gates a beautiful youth who was looking for a lodging. It was found that he could sing. At Vespers he chanted the *Magnificat* in such lovely tones that the monks fell silent in their ecstasy. That for once in their humble chapel the Virgin should have been commemorated fittingly sent them happy to their beds. But that night the Abbot had a vision of the Virgin herself. "Why came there up no sweet melody to-night?" was the question she had come to ask. The Abbot explained that the melody that night was the sweetest they had ever offered her. "I heard nothing," was the Virgin's answer. "If this youth sang,

he sang for his pleasure and for yours. Nothing ascended to me."

Might not this artless tale pass for comment on much that is known as worship in our Churches? Of the only valid worship, the effort to be worthy, that worship is rarely a counterpart. Vying with the opera and the concert hall, it is frequently no more than the offering of he-goats and rams. One is driven to wonder what pleasure the Almighty can be expected to find in a choral beauty whose end is as often as not its own perfection. What kind of honour do we pay Him in the lilt of catchy hymns filled with flatteries we do not feel and generally couched in doggerel? If I lay some stress on this it is only because the authorized shouting of vulgarities, musical and verbal, so often befools us into thinking we have worshipped.

The only worship that can possibly have value in the sight of God seems to me the practical. It is in what a man undertakes and does. That is all that gives significance to our anthems, canticles, and hymns, to our choirs and sonorous

organs. Without it they are but the substitute which Aaron found when he let the people sing and dance about a golden calf.

This is not said to discredit choirs and their singing. All I mean is that as an offering to God they must sometimes seem as vain oblations. "I am full of the burnt offerings of rams and he-goats. Cease to do evil; learn to do well. That alone will put life into your elaborate services and turn them into worship. In as far as they are sacred concerts and not much more they mean nothing at all to me."

VIII

Of preaching, another element in public worship, I will only say that in common Christian practice we have turned it from its original purpose. The earliest preaching gave information on events and teachings new to the world. But they are new to the world no longer. There is scarcely a child in any of the countries rated as Christian who does not get the chance to learn, in outline, at least the rudiments of his religion.

Of those in the habit of attending Churches there is practically no one not long ago familiar with everything a preacher can have to say. It is true that this may seem inconsistent with the widespread ignorance of Christian people; but this ignorance is chiefly as to elementary facts, not in those matters of conduct with which a modern preacher generally deals. We might say that in the sermon of the present day teaching has given way to exhortation; and exhortation rarely brings before us anything we do not know already.

Of this the result is that we have made of preaching a ceremonial observance, as to which the average congregation is in a dual state of mind. It is first insistent that a sermon shall be preached; and then it is listless, and sometimes even somnolent, during the act of preaching. Should the personality of the speaker or the material he uses compel attention it is given, as a rule, from the critical point of view, rather than from the devotional. A "good" preacher is judged for his forensic powers before anything else is considered.

That is, in preaching as in praise we primarily seek a form of entertainment. I happen to live in a community to which distinguished clergymen from all parts of this country, and as far away as England, are invited to come and preach. The messages they bring differ in no way from what can be heard any Sunday in the year in the simplest local church. And yet from all over the city, as well as from the cities roundabout, men and women, and chiefly women, will travel long distances to look at the strange face and hear the strange voice. Nominally, they do it in zeal for a higher instruction; in reality, they are drawn by novelty or celebrity. In much the same way we should go to hear an actor, a politician, or a prima donna. The sermon is only the medium in which special abilities are displayed.

Here I am anxious not to exaggerate. Scattered through all congregations will doubtless be humble souls who listen to both the inspired and the humdrum with a reverent desire to sift out the best. These are the diamonds in the

sand. But the sand is of wide extent, and the loveliest thing ever seen on it is likely to be the mirage. When we think of the vast amount of preaching that goes on in the world we can scarcely deny that the yield is sterile.

And yet it was not the sterility of preaching that struck me most distressingly when I began to think: it was the sterility of listening. The preacher, poor man, preaches because, as a rule, he cannot help himself. It is what he is paid for doing, and his parish would be shocked if he flinched from his job. Sunday by Sunday they demand that he shall fill with speech a certain length of time. This speech has ceased, in the main, to be the ardent spreading of good news, and became a cut-and-dried oration delivered for the most part to the long-ago converted. That it does some good is certainly the case; but that the good is in proportion to the energy expended few would maintain.

But if it were free from dangers to the listener this might be allowed to pass. Unhappily, the dangers are not slight. First there is that of

the hearer hearing too much, of his being satiated with unassimilated scraps. Then there is that of his being stupefied by repetition, the richest concept ceasing to mean anything because of its reiteration. Next there is that of treating as commonplace the rarest and most beautiful ideas ever placed before mankind. Lastly, and most to our present purpose, there is the tendency natural to all formalism to make the formalist feel that with a formal listening his duty has been done.

It is in this last that we find the menace perilous to Faith. Sunday after Sunday we let the waves of forensic piety roll over us. Some of us are indifferent; some of us are bored; some of us catch an idea or a turn of phrase of which we can approve, but which will probably melt from our memories before nightfall. Nevertheless, we are satisfied. We have gone. We have sat it through. Of more there has been no need. The ram and the he-goat being offered, the religious conventions have been fulfilled.

IX

If over this subject of worship and preaching I have been prolix it is only because in the stereotyped form in which both are given us at the present day they block the spiritual horizon. For most of us it is difficult to think of religion except as externalized by them and through them. A young man reaches a place where he feels that he ought to try to lead a better life. All he can think of is to begin again to go to church. It is the only form of corrective action he has ever been told anything about. Making an effort, he goes. In nine cases out of ten he finds himself, like the majority of those around him, a listless spectator of conventional devotion in which he has scarcely a part. The singing, the praying, the preaching are all done by someone else on his behalf. The singing he probably finds tedious; the prayers do not touch his needs; the sermon contains nothing he has not heard before. He goes a few times, and drops away again.

My point is that this is all he can see in the way of the spiritual life. The Church and its services bulk so large that he has never been told to look through them or behind them. What he cannot find in them he has to go without. No one has taught him that his own work for himself is more important, and may be more effective, than that of the Church could ever be. The Church, in my humbly expressed opinion, is too ready to take a man's salvation out of his own hands. "Do what I tell you, and I will see that you are saved" is in substance what each denomination says to its adherents. But this cannot be done. A man must work out his own salvation, even if it has to be with fear and trembling.

The Church has its uses, but they come, I think, after a man has done something for himself. They are incidental, secondary uses, not the first or the most imperative. To make them the first and the most imperative brings about, it seems to me, that confused religious state of mind which I take to be the weakness of our

present-day Christianity. Worship, prayer, and self-correction, if they are to be dynamic, must proceed from the human heart. They are not to be bought and paid for, as is so much the case in our standardized church services. To be the soil out of which Faith can spring they must offer the same living qualities which the earth offers to the seed. Only in the recesses of the self can this be found, and there the work must be done.

People tell us that the Church is being challenged. It is said to be on trial. Its severest critics are not its enemies but its friends. Those who have had the longest experiences in one or another of its schools are often those whose hearts ache over it most sadly. If I had anything to say on the question it would be that the Church claims to do more than she can fulfil. She is not humble enough or modest enough. Having taken up all the territory belonging to the religion of Christ she is inefficient in her use of it. A bitter assailant might say of her, with at least some show of justice, what Our Lord

said of the pharisees, that they did not themselves enter into the kingdom of Heaven, while those who were entering they hindered. It *is* often difficult for an earnest soul to get past the Church in order to enter the kingdom. By taking up too much space she blocks his way and blocks her own.

It is another of her self-inflicted disadvantages that her claims in the past have been so huge—some people would say so preposterous—that she cannot retire from any of them now and still save her face. Having persisted in speaking in the Name of God she cannot now eat her words. This is true of nearly all the denominations. The Holy Ghost has always been present at their councils and kept them from making mistakes. In their official teachings they can make little or no modification without laying God open to the charge of having changed His mind. Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, they have all had a monopoly of God to the partial or complete exclusion of everybody else. In their great doctrinal dif-

ferences they have never said, "This is what we think, but are open to correction"; they have flung it to the world that this is God's commandment. "No one can disagree with us unless he forfeits at least a portion of God's Truth." Having thus put themselves on the record of history it is next to impossible now for any of the Churches to climb down.

This is said not to disparage Churches but only to explain why I could not go to them for Faith. When I did I found their fixed, unelastic conventions of singing, sermons, and prayers standing in my way. So too with their week-day activities, clubs and societies, for men, for boys, for girls, for mothers, for missions, institutional, industrious, but too all-absorbing to leave any room for the needs of a man's soul. When I conferred privately with clergymen and ministers, as in those days I did not infrequently, asking to be helped to some small portion of the Faith that would remove mountains and uproot trees, I was looked upon as mildly mad. One learned man told me I belonged to the

goodly fellowship of the mystics, but left me there. Another said I was a spiritual revolutionist, but threw no light on my search. My search, as nearly as I could gather, was considered unreasonable in a world that had settled down to another kind of faith. For a Faith that would work I was driven at last, with some aid from a quarter whence I never had expected it, to look within myself.

X

This brings me to the difference between Faith and the Faiths.

Faith, as I understand it, is a power within which coöperates with God. Since it coöperates with God it increases human power to the exact extent of its coöperation. The strong are made stronger, and the weak more self-dependent. The inference we are allowed to draw is that there is almost nothing a man cannot do if he only has the right kind of Faith, and has enough of it.

In this way the whole Christian Church seems

to have considered the matter till we come to the first great crises of dogmatic conflict. Then, for reasons too complex to enter into here, a new twist was given to the word. Instead of being the power that coöperates with God, Faith became allegiance to certain opinions about God. Admitting that those opinions were the right ones, the function of Faith was still, to a great degree, limited to being true to them. It was no longer a question of doing anything with God, or of heightened spiritual power. All the uses of the Faith which had once been dynamic were fused in submission to those who undertook to teach.

This ruling may be said to have obtained throughout all the intervening centuries. If you hear the word Faith your thought leaps at once to some school of the Christian religion. It is the Anglican Faith, or the Baptist Faith, or the Congregational Faith, or the Lutheran Faith, or the Roman Catholic Faith that is first of all in your mind. In the sense of the power that coöperates with God the word has

but a secondary meaning, and of this meaning few of us ever think. Faith is a set of opinions, authorized, prescribed, and as far as possible enforced.

This, of course, is confusing. The simple-minded man considers the three hundred sects that go to make up the Christian Church and asks, Which of them is true? Each one has its adherents, who swear by it, and would even die for it. Is there any infallible test which will tell me which of them all is the right one?

Once more the only test I can think of is the practical. To my mind that Church is right beyond all others which most effectively eases the human lot and elevates human character. But it is just here that our great historic communions show no superiority to each other. What one does they all do. No one of them elevates human character or eases the human lot any more efficiently than its competitors. It could not, I think, be contended that on either of these points the Protestant ranks above the Catholic, or the Catholic above the Protestant.

The Methodist is not better than the Presbyterian, or the Presbyterian than the Unitarian, or the Unitarian than the Swedenborgian. So you might go through the list of our three hundred and more denominations. If the good they do to their followers is taken as a touchstone of the Truth they possess none has more of the Truth than any other. No one would say that in business, for instance, a Wesleyan was more trustworthy than a Quaker, or a Quaker than an Episcopalian.

The same thing is true of any benefit they work in the human lot. Of the communions to which time has given a kind of orthodoxy none is richer in blessings than the rest. The lot of the Catholic is as hard as that of the Protestant; the lot of one kind of Protestant is as hard as that of another kind of Protestant. If Truth has value it surely should prove itself by its efficiency. The Church which claims to be the One True Church, or the Churches which claim to be component parts of the One True Church, should be marvels of success in the mitigation

of our miseries. If one has more of the Truth than another its members should more conspicuously be able to transmute that Truth into terms of prosperity and happiness. But this is not the case. To prosperity and happiness the Churches do contribute a great deal. My point is that in any advantages they offer us in this world they are equally helpful. On the other hand, we may say that for the rivalries, prejudices, and dislikes they breed the return is absolutely nil.

And if a particular Church can do nothing for us in this world that cannot be done just as well by any other Church, so, it seems to me, must be the effect in the life that comes after this. No one, I suppose, would now contend that in the next phase of existence it will make any difference whether we have been Protestants or Catholics, Methodists or Presbyterians. Whatever the Christian religion has to do with our being "saved" will surely be done for one as well as for another. The Infinite Evolution which we call Eternal Life will scarcely be affected by

the fact that our preferences went to Rome, or Canterbury, or Geneva. To think so is grotesque. Even those Churches which once had no hesitation in condemning all who were not its members to eternal fire, or came as near to this condemnation as they dared, would shrink to-day from any such severity. It is safe to say that no one now believes that when we come to the other side any one will be disqualified because of the Church to which he has belonged.

If, then, neither Catholic nor Protestant can do for us in this world anything that the other cannot do, and if in the next world both will cease to have significance, what do we gain by keeping up the distinction? What do we gain by an irritating internecine effort to make proselytes? I have heard Catholics boast of the number of non-Catholics who had joined the Roman Church in a single year; and I have heard Protestants boast of the number of converts they had made from Rome. But what good does it do the proselytes and converts when they have been made? If neither char-

acter nor prospects have been improved what can they have gained? What a Church can *do* must be the test of its merit, not what it teaches doctrinally. What it teaches doctrinally can only be shown as an advance on what other Churches teach doctrinally by the results it is able to accomplish. Where the results are about the same, as they are between Protestants and Catholics, or between Protestants among themselves, the amount of doctrinal Truth may be rated as about the same. If there is any Church on earth which can beyond all others elevate character and ease the human lot, that is undoubtedly the truest one.

It is the shifting of the function of the Church from doing to teaching that to my mind has confused the issue as to Faith. The demand made on the individual has been to believe certain tenets, *not* to train himself for spiritual power. Training for spiritual power has scarcely been considered, except in so far as spiritual power may come through ecclesiastical rites. The result has been a succession of relatively

"faithless" generations. Where Faith in the doctrinal teachings of the Churches has been strongest, Faith as a spiritual agency in human hands has been nearest to null. When the Nazarene Master utters the cry: "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find Faith on the earth?" it is obvious that He is thinking not of Faith as a set of doctrines, but of Faith as a power that would adjust human wrongs. When St. John writes that "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our Faith," it cannot be the Anglican, or the Baptist, or the Congregational Faith, that he has in mind, but Faith as a power within the individual.

This Faith being more or less shelved by the Churches I was forced, as I have said, to look for it myself. In this I received some help outside the historic Churches, a help from which I might have profited more than I have done. That I was obliged to turn away, even to that slight degree, from the great communion into which I was born has been a cause of grief to me. "It is all here, right in our own Church,"

friends have sometimes said to me, in talking these things over. "Yes," I reply, "it is there implicitly. But it is not brought out. It is hard to get at. It is kept out of sight. The preoccupations of the Churches are so intensely with their own regulations and societies that the individual is overlooked."

The ordinary man cannot even listen to the kind of notices given out on Sunday and feel that in such specialized activities there is any place for him. When it comes to his deeper needs, and at times in his life he is really aware of them, he hardly knows where to go for guidance. Only by self-correction, turning to God in thought, and trying to make myself a little worthier of Him, was I, a type of the ordinary man, able to find my way at all.

XI

4. Much harder than any of the three undertakings on which I have commented was the effort to be sure of God. By the effort to be sure of God I mean no less than what is said by Our

Lord: "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." That is, Understand that your prayer is already answered; know that the Father is eager to give you what you want. It will come to you in proportion as you keep the channel of reception clear.

To be sure that what you want will be given you, however improbable the prospect seems, is, of course, extremely difficult. The only way I can see of doing it even remotely is in approaching it by degrees. You cannot wake up out of lifelong half-heartedness and say when you are desperate, "Now I will pray and believe, and see what happens." This is what is commonly done. Most of us wait till we see no other possibility, and then putting up a wild prayer stiffen ourselves to an act of Faith. Seeing all the chances against us we force ourselves to try for once the fantastic method of the New Testament. When nothing comes of it we drop back to our former impotence, putting Faith on the list of remedies that have failed.

I see no means of having Faith sufficient for great things till we have learned it first in small. That is the gist of my entire argument. If we are not willing to begin at the beginning, convincing ourselves by little proofs before we can face big ones, Faith is likely to be no more than a word to us. As I have said already, it is part of the weakness of our system that we are expected to march up to Faith and swing its mightiest problems with no training whatever beforehand. Because the duty has been imposed on us by an outside authority, we are expected to believe all the doctrines of the Christian religion, stupendously abstruse as they mostly are, by a mere act of will. In the same way, it is supposed that in trial we shall have some semblance of the Faith that will remove mountains when we have had no grounding in the processes. The grounding counts before everything, just as in other undertakings. There is no knowledge which does not begin with the elementary. To this the knowledge of God is not an exception. Those who have never

learned its alphabet will rarely find it possible to create the masterpiece.

Here I am speaking in general. I do not deny that some wholly untutored soul may rise on a sudden to some mighty spiritual accomplishment. While I have no personal knowledge of any such event I am told that it happens, and have little doubt that it may. But I think it must happen seldom. For most of us the regular way must be the only way; and the regular way is always that of advance a few steps at a time. That there is so little dynamic Faith in the world must, I venture to say, be due to the fact that the Churches have never taught it from the primary stages upward.

That must be my excuse for seeking a method of my own. When I say my own I mean something that I was able to coördinate and practise, though those who helped me, and were not of the historic Churches, had gone farther on the way than I ever have. What it enabled me to do was to deal with little everyday commonplace things, and see first of all how the Father helped

me in these. Having seen that he helped me in these I was the more encouraged to go on to what seemed to me graver problems, and more difficult. Helped here, I could venture new experiments. When these succeeded I could dare to make further deductions, and hope that they would be verified.

In other words, Faith is not a leaping in the dark, however courageous the act may be; it is a proving of each step as we ourselves press on. What has met my difficulties of yesterday will meet, I am permitted to believe, those of to-morrow. When to-morrow has passed, with still greater dangers overcome, I can, with sturdier confidence, take heart for the next day. When the next day has passed, when weeks and months have passed, when a large slice of a lifetime has gone by, and I look back to see that at all times the Universal Heart has poured out all I needed in full and loving sufficiency, why, then, I can believe that it always will. It is not merely the cheerful optimism which persists in hoping for the best, and is sometimes tiresome,

which makes me believe that: it is my own experience. Having tried, however feebly, to cooperate with God, and having found that He coöperates with me more readily than I ever supposed possible, I draw the conclusion that if I do my best not to fail Him he will never fail me.

This is as far as I have gone in the way of certainty of God. It is not very far. Millions and millions of Christians in all ages, men and women who have never been as plodding and painstaking as I, have through sheer spiritual force advanced farther beyond my slight attainment than the next life is beyond this. But I, an average commonplace person, am telling my tale to other average commonplace persons, in the hope that some bit of my experience may be of use in theirs. I am not writing for bishops, or ministers, or clergymen, or any of the wise good people who hardly ever fall, and so do not have to strive. If I may snatch a term from the old evangelistic phraseology, I am writing as a sinner for sinners. I do not pretend to be able

to do anything else. I must say and say again, that I have done very little; but the little I have done has been to me transcendently worth while.

XII

I have mentioned two points on which it seems to me Faith should prove its efficiency—the elevation of character and the easing of the human lot.

As to the first of these I shall not be expected, in my own case, to say anything. On the other hand, I should be guilty of black ingratitude if I did not take this occasion to bear witness to the fact that ever since trying to put my system, crude as it is, into operation, my conditions have steadily improved. My work grew stronger at once. It became more acceptable to editors and publishers. Instead of being obliged to force a market I found one open. I was better paid. I had a richer fecundity. After ten years of wandering about Europe, largely for the sake of economy, I soon found myself back in America, with a settled and comfortable home.

It is easy to say of this that it was due to nothing but the natural development of such talents as I may possess. I understand that, and have often said the same thing myself. People do succeed to whom such a method as mine would seem cumbrous or ridiculous. Of this we shall speak more fully when we approach the subject of Success. All I would say now is this: that, if we decide to follow a course, and that course brings us exactly where we want to go, it is only fair to suppose that for us at least the course was the right one. In addition to that we know little or nothing of other people's struggles. We see a man achieve what appears to us like success, and to our eyes it looks as if he had done it out of sheer ability. But we do not know, and have no means of knowing, what travail of his soul has entered into it. We can speak with authority only about ourselves. Of myself then I can say that I do not think that without some attempt to coöperate with God through the faculty of Faith I should have reached such slight degree of success as I can

claim. That has to be enough for me. What other men can do is not my affair. All I know is the way which I as an individual have trodden, and the end to which it has led me.

The end to which it has led me is not in freedom from cares and responsibilities. Rather it is in the assurance that whatever they are I shall be able to carry them. I am delivered, and I think for ever, of that nightmare time when helplessness and ruin seemed to lie ahead. Many of us know this terror, when the collapse of whatever we hold dear seems imminent. Now, when it threatens, I have my experience to fall back upon. It would be neither love nor wisdom, I reason, to lead me thus far only to abandon me. It would be an economic waste. If I was ever worth anything I must now be worth more, and shall not be thrown away.

Moreover, the knowledge that the great ocean of supply will always rush in where I free the channel gives me courage. With courage I get energy. With energy comes the fighting spirit

which finds a kind of joy in overriding obstacles. Life becomes then a cheerful thing, free from the curse of nervous irritations, merely through registering on the side of healthy, sane activity.

And if I emphasize so much what some would condemn as being only rewards in this world, I reply that it is in this world I am living. Here are my duties, my problems, my affections. These are what I have to face and live through. I am not called on yet to undertake the duties, problems, and affections of the next world. I think of that world with the imaginative faculty, as who does not? but it is in this world that I have my interests now. Whatever religion can do for us should surely be done here.

I do not affirm that the easing of the human lot is the highest and farthest reach of the spiritual life; but I do say that it is the beginning. A beginning we must have if there is to be a development. If there is to be a development we must have some proof to develop *from*. And the proof that will touch us most effectively is in

our own persons and lives. That will be convincing when doctrinal theses too far above our heads will leave us cold.

So I have made my experiments along humble lines, finding that, as far as I have gone, Faith is Power. The Power is in proportion to the Faith, and the Faith to its own simplicity. Where it is exercised in matters so high that I cannot understand them, as perhaps it generally is, I get little or nothing out of it. When it comes down to my level, keeping pace with my slow steps, it is hardly too much to say that it transforms the world.

CHAPTER IV

OUR WAY OF MEETING HIM AND A NEW HUMAN FACULTY

I

THE point I would notice next is this, that the concept of Faith as Power is purely Christian. No other religion sees the human being as lord of himself and of the conditions surrounding him. In the other great teachings, Mahometan, Buddhistic, Confucian, the conditions surrounding him are so imperious that his wisest course is submission. While this is not the place for a discussion of comparative religions it is essential to point out the fact that the method of Christ alone refuses to yield to the dominance of the material. If any other system eludes this charge it is by insisting that the material has no importance, and so treating it

with disdain. Denial of its claims pushed to the point of beggary and homelessness is offered as the surest way to God. I repeat and repeat again, for I know that it will be found true, that only the religion of Christ takes that poor, frail, helpless creature whom we know as the individual and arms him with a strength that can, potentially at least, make him irresistible.

II

Not that this was wholly new with that record of spiritual experience which we know as the New Testament. It was a long slow development coming out of the farthest depths of man's immemorial past. How far back it goes we can see from one of the earliest statements made in that mass of prehistoric chronicle given us in the earlier pages of Genesis. After noting the first great struggle of the material as personified in Cain with the spiritual in Abel we have the information that "then began men to call on the name of the Lord." This calling was probably no more than the wild, desperate appeal which

constitutes much of what we still understand as prayer, but it was at least a recognition of a force which might possibly prove a help. The growth of this Hope throughout the Old Testament into the New is one of the most imposing phenomena in human history. From Hope it passes into Trust, from Trust into Faith. In Jesus of Nazareth Faith is proved to be a practical working force surpassing even what we know of electricity.

A large part of the value of our Sacred Writings will be found in the record it keeps of precisely this line of striving on the part of the human soul. Jesus of Nazareth did not discover Faith: He only proved it by actual demonstration. But it came to Him from the past, not, to be sure, in the fullness with which He left it behind Him, but in its main rudiments. All previous generations had been busy with the evolution of a means which, as must have been dimly perceived from the beginning, would increase man's power a thousandfold. Any one who chooses can read the Bible with a view to

tracing this expansion. Its seed is in the most primitive. Its onpush can be read in Job, in Abraham, in Moses, in David, in Isaiah, in many others of lesser fame but no less ardent assurance. It does not grow in a night, like Jonah's gourd; it waxes slowly, with hesitations, experiments, failures, and successes, through many centuries. In its utmost reach, as in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and some of the minor prophets it nearly bursts the limitations of Trust to flame out into Faith; but never quite. What seems to be lacking is the perception that man can act as well as God. All is left to God's mercy, power, and goodwill. Man is only the recipient. That he can coöperate with God, that whatsoever things he seeth the Father do he can do also, is the special discovery of the Lord Jesus.

Of the many blends of interest in the Bible this, to me, is one of the most important. It helps to explain, too, why the Old Testament has a use we do not always ascribe to it. It is a common thing to hear puzzled men and women complain that they do not see why the Old

Testament, with its savageries and horrors, should be read to them, or why they should read it for themselves. Its value is that of the root and the trunk to the tree. Without them you can have neither blossom nor fruit. Without them, in the instance we are discussing, Faith would be as a flower blown on the wind, with no root in the human heart and history. To understand Faith as a power making for Success we must see it, not as coming to us from any source outside of life, but springing from whatever is most vital in ourselves. It is the product of our own straining toward the thing which will help us most. Jesus of Nazareth found it at the point at which Trust could be transcended, and a full new agency in the hands of man be put into demonstration.

As a simple accomplishment this seems to me tremendous. It also seems to me one that has been largely overlooked. It is not too much to say that the historic Churches have been too preoccupied with other things to pay it much attention. Candidly speaking, the welfare of

man on earth has never been an aim as to which the historic Churches have shown much zeal. Without wholly neglecting it they have gone about the business half-heartedly. Only within a hundred years have they inspired any real attempt to mitigate sickness or soften the lot of the insane. In the presence of poverty and crime they still acknowledge their inability to suggest adequate curative methods. It would not be much too harsh to say that the Churches, as a rule, care little about the welfare of man on earth so long as he permits them to direct his way to Heaven. As to that they have always been keen, each with its own infallible formula.

And, in a sense, this has been no more than natural. Each has been trying to work out its own phase of the Christian ideal, and with but a partial understanding of the whole. Of the thousands of aspects of the Truth one Church or one age has never been able to see more than two or three. An epoch of redemption through suffering and the conviction of the resurrection

of the dead is followed by an epoch in which the ideal is an imperial Church, sovereign of the temporal world. An epoch of an imperial Church is followed by an epoch of terrified seeking salvation from sin, with the human race seen as cursed by the wrath of God. An epoch of terrified seeking salvation from sin is followed by an epoch of grim pietism stamping out joy. An epoch of grim pietism reacts in a longing for colour and romance, with the revival of devotion to a single sacrificial sacrament. These are but a few of the more striking phases, with an infusion of the Truth in all of them, and also some lack of balance. There are many more such phases, and I mention them only to explain why the Churches have never had the time to develop their care for the welfare of the earthly man. Since they could not attend to everything at once *that* has been pushed to the wall.

But though they have never helped man to educate himself to the spiritual power which he can exercise they cannot keep the evidence of this power from being right on the surface of the

Christian Scriptures. If they have ignored it, or if, as is most probable, they have not been sufficiently advanced to know how to use it, it still remains there. After all, the Churches are but human institutions, subject to all the human ebb and flow in being true to divine direction. No more mischievous impression ever got abroad than that to the effect that a handful of pious men in the first or the second or the third or the fourth or the seventh or the tenth or the sixteenth century knew it all in such a way as to have the right to bind us with beliefs and limitations. This is not common sense. Had the Almighty ever meant to give to any man, or any succession of men, or any group of men, such a power as that, the Scriptures must have rung with it. That these good people should have groped their own way toward Truth is well enough. But that they should be given the authority to compel us to grope our way exactly as they did theirs is not within reason. The claims to authority put forth by some of the Churches were serious matters to past genera-

tions, but to ours, to whom the test of the fig and the thistle is the most compelling one, they are of doubtful account. In the present case, they are not strictly our business. Our main concern with them is that in the past they have turned away the mind from the consideration of the individual's right to spiritual power.

That right may be lawfully viewed as a modern advance in Christian understanding. It has been left to the late 19th and earlier 20th centuries to perceive the self-evident truth that the bearing of figs proves the fig tree, and the bearing of thistles the weed. Argue as you will, there is no other test worth considering. Found your Church on the Rock of Peter, reconstruct it by all the English and German reformers, break it up into schools with Knox, Wesley, George Fox, and George Brown, and still, if it cannot bring forth the fruit of the individual's spiritual power, it is but a garden of thistles. It stands to reason that no Church, whatever its pretensions, could possibly save a man who could not through Divine coöperation save himself.

III

Only the Christian principle has ever tackled material force, as one mighty wrestler tackles another, and subdued it. This principle is the strong man armed who, in the words of the Nazarene Master, enters the palace of another strong man, binds him, and despoils him of his goods. It is never understood as it ought to be that the Christian ideal is before everything else an ideal of strength. *To overcome* might be said to be its motto. It is "to him that overcometh" that the promises are made in the first great vision of the Apocalypse. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," are among the parting words of the Master, "but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." "And this is the victory that overcometh the world," St. John writes, many years later, "even our Faith." This is made even clearer by a modern translation: "For every child of God overcomes the world; and the victorious principle which has overcome the world is our Faith."

Now what do we mean by overcoming the world? We can probably mean a good many things. Each man wants to overcome the world at the point at which he fears that the world may overcome him.

But when in this sense we speak of the world we do not, of course, mean the noble planet on which we live, nor yet our faulty human society eternally struggling upward. Rather we mass together all the destructive impulses generated by our life, of which the evil influences are evident to everyone, binding them together with a word. If to the Master and His followers the word *world* was the one that came readiest it was because the organization they were called on to face was so imposingly corrupt.

It was alive with forces which threatened the individual in all that made him master of himself. These forces degraded him, not only morally, but physically and economically. They made him a slave, and if not a slave a pauper. They racked his body with disease, and dragged his mind with a lethargy like mental death.

Whether in Greece or Rome or Egypt or Syria or Judea, only the few, the appallingly few, were born to conditions above the starkest suffering. Among the masses misery of every abominable kind seethed and squirmed, and bred more misery still. For the cruel, triumphant few there was the splendour of the palace, the temple, and the stadium. For them were the magnificence of baths, the roses and wine of orgies, together with the graces which the poet, the sculptor, and the architect added to external life. But the dense hordes of the people in all the civilized lands starved and rotted in a helplessness which could only be borne because hope was not an idea in the mind.

It was into a world like that that Jesus the Christ came with the cry, "I have overcome it. I have brought you a power which the ills of which you are afraid will never be able to withstand. I know this because I have proved it for myself. Through those boyhood and early manhood years in Galilee I have been busy with my tests. By the law I have worked out I have

fed the hungry, healed the sick, and raised the dead. What is even more to the purpose, you can do it too. I have overcome that world which will try to degrade, enfeeble, impoverish, and enslave you. And the victorious principle by which you can follow my example is your Faith."

I have said that each of us will want to overcome the world from his own particular point of view. I mean by that that our outlook being limited we shall be anxious to conquer the danger which seems specially to be a menace to ourselves. That danger will differ as careers and characters differ. One man will seek release from evil habits; another a repentance which will mean the forgiveness of his sins; another the conquest of the overweening in himself. To specify is useless since each heart knows its own need which is probably not exactly like the need of any other heart. For myself my hope to overcome the world lies chiefly in swinging my temporal responsibilities. Rightly or wrongly on my part, my sins have never greatly troubled

me. Not that they haven't been serious enough; but I have never believed, and could not now believe, that they weigh very terribly in the balance against God's overwhelming love for me. From what I have already said it will be clear that I recognize them fully as obstacles which I put in the way of God's generosity reaching me; but so long as I am trying to correct them it is not my habit of mind to think much more about them. My responsibilities, on the other hand, are my life. They are the life of this planet, at any rate. In numberless ways, familiar to us all, the world would keep me from fulfilling them, so that to overcome the world in this respect constitutes my part in the universal fight.

I ask, however, to have it observed, that this may easily not be another man's. The victorious principle must be applied by each according to his nature. I know that to many good people it would be shocking to hear me say that my sins have not greatly troubled me, because they have been greatly troubled by their own. But suffer it to be so. They try to overcome the

world in their way; I try to do the same in mine. Had I their sins and they my cares we might all be putting up another kind of struggle. But no two of us have exactly the same struggle. All we possess in common is a victorious principle which each must use in the way that best suits himself.

IV

It is necessary, I think, to state here that I am by no means trying to draw up a synopsis of the Christian religion as a whole. I am tracing only one strand in it. Much that I might have said, and shall not say, as to the work of the Christ will occur to everyone. Each of us has his favourite view of that work on which he likes to throw emphasis. If I throw emphasis on mine it is not because I am indifferent to what other people value, but only because I am compelled to keep strictly to the letter of my theme. There are whole regions of thought concerning the Saviour, the Redeemer, the Son of God, into which I shall not enter. This does not mean

that I exclude them from our interest, but only that, according to such judgment as I have, I choose what is essential to my purpose, and no more. My task is to set forth, to the best of a small ability, the Man who added to man's powers.

V

This He did by an enlargement of man's mentality. It is as an enlargement of man's mentality that I see Faith first of all. It is not merely an exercise of the mind; it is a whole new faculty. It is as much a new faculty as sight would be to the man born blind, or speech to the deaf and dumb. A new high point in evolution, it has been reached by the striving of the human soul, working up and up and ever up till it reaches its purpose in the achievement of Him who demonstrated to us in actual fact how near a man can come to being on the plane with God.

Before this demonstration man's chief mental endowments were Memory, Reason, and Imagination. This is not a scientific psychological statement, but a simplification of my own in-

tended to clarify what I have to say. Impossible now to trace the stages by which our race advanced to the possession of what we know as human Intelligence, but with it must have come soon, if not at once, some power of Memory. With Intelligence and Memory Reason could not have been far away. All our knowledge of primitive man shows him as doing his best with these attainments, the imaginative faculty being still no more than incipient. It is probable that as many ages must have elapsed between the command of Reason and that of Imagination as between the command of Imagination and that of Faith.

Of Memory and Reason it is unnecessary to say anything, but a few words on the subject of Imagination will, I hope, be helpful.

VI

The dominance of Imagination as an element of Success in life has never, I venture to think, been sufficiently recognized. Somewhere out of an uncouth past most of us have drawn the idea

that Imagination is a wayward, untrustworthy instinct which should be denied and beaten back. There have been whole movements, that of the Puritans, for example, of which it was an avowed intention to suppress it. Even without such attack all the tendencies of our competitive civilization make for the limitation of its action to a favoured few.

And yet it is Imagination that always lifts man up on the wings of his own possibilities. Memory can only record; Reason can only deduce. Without Imagination, both are more or less static forces, with small power of development. Till Imagination came to their aid the prehistoric races were at a standstill. The primitive peoples of the present day, the native Australians, the African tribes, the North American Indians, in all of whom the imaginative faculty is but rudimentary, are at a standstill even now. Only the power of perceiving what can be, what should be, and what shall be, is able to raise man out of the elemental and render him dynamic.

It is an ironic fact that while the Puritans were repressing Imagination in themselves and their children, they were living in its grasp. It was their inspiration. Out of the peaceful hamlets of Austerfield and Basset Lawe it drove them to seek a kingdom of dream. Though they probably never knew it, it ruled their Churches, it established their laws, it directed their migrations. The impulse they repelled as Satanic was their preservation. As time went on it developed their resources, it founded their universities, it built their factories, it made their country rich. Nothing succeeded with them which did not first have Imagination to suggest it and later bring it to fruition.

And it is so still. The rewards of the world go to the imaginative man. Of this the story of modern life is full of illustrations. It was Imagination which showed John Rockefeller, before others had dreamt of it, what was to be the influence of oil. It was Imagination that revealed to Henry Ford, at a time when others thought him mad, the demand for a cheap motor car.

While these are but the more startling examples of their kind, the same thing is true of every man who founds a little business out of which he makes a living, or has any kind of vision which he strives to turn into a reality. Imagination rules the world. Only its possessor ever comes to the top. Without it a man can be neither statesman, nor banker, nor artist, nor business man, nor explorer, nor inventor, nor anything calling for intelligence.

So much is this the case that we have instituted many means of stimulating the imaginative faculty. All creative work has this special end in view. In reading a novel or a poem or in going to a play we may be no more aware of this fact than we are aware of the particular contribution to the system in the various foods we eat. In the same way that we crave for fruit or fish or milk because something within us requires just that kind of nourishment, so when the imaginative stock runs low we ask for music or poetry or pictures or fiction or the drama, according to the taste, till we are braced up

again. Those whose work runs in a prosaic routine, such as clerks in offices, women in housework, and all who are engaged in standardized tasks, will need this stimulus more than those who can travel, or mix in cultured companies, or who themselves are engaged with imaginative work. There are, however, times with all of us when the supply becomes exhausted, and that part of the spirit needs to be renewed.

And when this happens we of those walks in life which may be termed privileged know what we can do. We can go to the theatre, we can read a book, we can listen to music, we can do any one of half-a-dozen things which we know from past experience will re-create that which we have lost. With out instinct for words re-creation is what we call it, though we rarely think of what it is which we create anew.

VII

But here we must remember that only to the classes termed privileged has this re-creation been possible. The vast majority of human beings

have had to do without it. In them the Imagination has been forced into disuse to a point at which it has been nearly atrophied. It is that fact which enables those whom we call the working classes to be so largely indifferent to beauty, to religion, to literature, to the greater problems of mankind, and to anything whatever which partakes of the higher life. I have not said totally: I have said largely. Those who know the narrowness of the life the poor have lived, up to quite recently, at any rate, know how blocked and blind is the outlook which to us of the minority the Imagination offers over the world. They see what is before them and around them, and not much else. When the mental stock runs low there is nothing to resupply it. They are not readers of books, they do not go to the theatre, they hear no music, they visit no galleries of pictures. All these recreations are beyond their leisure, their habits, or their means. They have never been taught to make use of them. If they tried they would scarcely know how.

And the humbler classes among our own people are but a small portion of those who have been dispossessed of the imaginative faculty among the races of mankind. China, India, Africa, teem with them. In these countries, as in our own, the stimulation of creative work has been for the relatively few. The masses have been like a people parched with thirst, but to whom nature affords no such refreshment as water. With some degree of Memory and some degree of Reason they have been compelled to get along as best they could. Their best has been inadequate, through sheer limitation of outlook. Without Imagination the human being is but a few removes above the animal, seeing that the animal also has his measure of both Memory and Reason. Far beyond any reckoning of ours this inhibition on the part of the greater number has delayed our progress, making all our advance like the lifting of dead weights.

It has remained for our own time to do anything to ameliorate this condition. It will not be a digression from my theme, it will be directly

along the lines of it, if I say that one invention or discovery, call it what you will, has done more to rouse the Imagination in those in whom it was suppressed than all that the past centuries have contributed together. I mean the motion picture. I dare to think that the significance of this new departure in human effort is not yet apparent to the great majority even of our social thinkers. The fact is that for the first time in the history of man something is offered to the simpler people which appeals to them on principles they can understand. For the first time they find their famished imaginations roused, stimulated, fed. Those who hitherto have either been denied, or provided with that which was beyond their capacity, have now been given something which meets them on their level; and the response has been outside all possible calculation.

It is said in Spain that the old Spanish proverb, "All roads lead to the bull ring," can now be quoted as, "All roads lead to the cinema." The same thing is true all over Europe and America.

It is true, not only all over Europe and America, but all over China, India, Burmah, Japan, and into the heart of Central Africa. Wherever a motion picture theatre is opened there you will find the throngs. The phenomenon is one of the most remarkable in modern social history, deserving an attention which has not been accorded it.

My own explanation can be illustrated by the picture of the water hole with which the cinema itself has made us familiar. Where there is a water hole all the animals come with the single desire to drink. Lions, zebras, tigers, giraffes, and antelopes seemingly forget their mutual feuds in the presence of that which supplies their thirst. So wherever there is a picture theatre, in whatever country in the world, those whom our civilizations have kept mentally parched rush to slake their need.

That the stimulant which thus wakes the dormant Imagination is not always of the purest or the highest seems to me a matter of comparatively slight importance. You can correct

what is wrong; you cannot revive what is atrophied. Better that the Imagination should work foolishly than that it should not work at all. If the motion picture sometimes gives a false idea of life, it does no worse than a hundred other agencies which our social system accepts thankfully. The rectification of false views of life is one of our main preoccupations at all times. What we have as a veritable asset is the extension of the imaginative powers of the race. If Faith is an element in Success, Imagination is an element in Faith. It may even be called its foundational element, its real point of departure.

VIII

We might define Faith as Imagination when Imagination coöperates with God. Without Imagination to begin with I do not see how there can be any Faith at all. This is true not only of God as our Fellow Worker—the Faith which is our theme—but of doctrinal Faith as well. Think of the amount of Imagination which must have gone into such conceptions as those of the

Trinity, of the Sacrifice of the Mass, of the Protestant "Scheme of Salvation." Imagination informs and infuses the whole of the Christian system, becoming Faith where it passes into confidence in God.

Faith, therefore, as I see it, is an extension of Imagination, as Imagination is an extension of Reason, and Reason an extension of Memory. It is the farthest outpost of our present stage in mental evolution. It is a natural, not a supernatural, quality, and we use it in the natural way in which we use the faculties from which it sprang. It is for all workaday times and purposes, not something to be reserved for Sundays, or brought out only in connection with high spiritual themes. There is no task, however commonplace, no aim in life, however humble, but that Faith can enlarge it, and render it important and successful.

IX

Imagination working with God!

In general, I think, it works without Him, and

even so has much of the good of the world to its credit. Since it is our faculty of looking before and after, of seeing what is possible and devising means with which to strive for it, it is a great acquisition in itself alone. It is the mother of all discovery, all invention, all learning, all practical experiment, in religion, science, commerce, statesmanship, and art. Now take it one step higher up and associate it consciously with God. Its resources, already vast, immediately become infinite. Its mighty powers touch the outer edge at least of Divine Almightiness. In association with God our efforts to do our work well get the same kind of vibrating impulse which thrills the wire from contact with electricity. We work henceforth in a higher medium, and so with a heightened effectiveness. Much of what we have worried about begins to take care of itself, which perhaps could be better expressed in the words that God takes care of it.

Here I am anxious not to seem highfaluting or far-fetched. It is fatally easy to invoke God's intervention, declaring that it will do this or

that for us, when all the while we are only swimming in sentimental pietism. A large part of what we hear in preaching as to the love of God and God's care for His own is, I am afraid, tinged with this vice of unreality. We are all naturally prone to use beautiful, high-sounding phrases of which we have only partially tested the truth, even if we have done as much as that, and if in this little book I fall into the temptation, it is not from lack of fighting against it. For this reason I keep down all I have to say of Faith, and God's coöperation with the individual. to the little that I know, or think I know, from my own experience. To many this will seem uninspired and insufficient, but it is the best that I can do.

What, then, do we mean by coöperation with God? Nothing at all pietistic or high-flown.

We start from the basis that whatever our work in life it is essential to the welfare of us all. I am, let us say, a labourer, or a doctor, or an actor, or a lawyer, or a clerk, or a housekeeper, or a dressmaker, or a domestic servant, or a lady

holding a high position in society. Each makes to the social system the contribution for which he or she is fitted. I also make mine, and making it I remember that it must be God's will that I give of my very best. Giving of my very best I can reasonably call Him into a kind of partnership. That is, I can say, "This is His work as well as mine, and He will help in it." That is all. It is not a forced or artificial state of mind; it is one of reasonableness and tranquillity. If I work with Him, He will work with me, and so I can hope to succeed.

What constitutes God's working with me I find it hard to express. I suppose I find it hard to express because I do not understand it. All I know is what happens, and what happens is that my small affairs have a way of turning out well when my own uncorrected misgivings would make but a gloomy forecast. It is easy to say, as I have declared already, that they would have gone well anyhow, but that does not seem to me a fair line of reasoning. If at one time in my life I tried Imagination without God, and fared

badly, and if at another time in my life I used my Imagination to connect God with my efforts and fared well it seems to me only just to conclude that the latter was the more practical way. That a happy reaction should take place once would, of course, not be convincing; neither would it be convincing a second time or a third; but when it is a question of years, of a large part of one's lifetime, only one conclusion seems possible.

X

If I again had children to bring up, I think I should teach them this principle of working in all simplicity with God as the groundwork of their religion. I should not tease them with the silly little prayers we compel them to lisp at mother's knee, and which rarely have a meaning for them then or at any other time. I should not drag them to church services, however important they feel at being taken, which they cannot understand, so losing for all the rest of their lives the keenness of churchgoing as a

privilege. I should tell them no Bible stories, and of the Mystery of the Incarnation give them only the incidents enabling them to keep Christmas.

In other words, I should be chary of imparting anything of the Christian religion till the opening mind is prepared to receive it seriously, a little at a time. As it is, we throw it at children with a broadcast hand which makes them undervalue it. Too often they have cheapened and despised it before really learning what it is. This I ascribe to the premature insistence of the home, the nursery, and the Sunday School. All three act, when they act at all, with a wastefulness which prepares the way for the common abandonment of Faith.

What I should not hesitate to teach to any child, in proportion to his growing ability to take it in, is his power of working with a loving Father eager to work with him. This I should do not merely because the concept is dear to me, but because it seems to me the natural beginning of a life which, it is hoped, will find some use for

spiritual principles. A child of four or five can easily grasp something of what it means and try to put it into operation. Moreover, it is a simple and wholesome thought, stimulating to an energy beginning to unfold. It offers him not something to say but something to do. Something to do is the most vital element in anything which claims to be dynamic. Any child of the age when reason begins to appeal to him can understand that to be truthful, obedient, clean, whatever is taught to him as duty, is his method of working with God in such a way that God will work with him, and will make an effort to do it. This is his prayer, his worship, the guarantee he gives of understanding more when more can be explained to him. It is something he can practise privately, independently, keeping his own dignity. To perceive, on however small a scale, that what he earns is paid to him will be a stimulus to earning more.

This he can take to school with him, and later on to college. There it could give him a lead through that religion which then begins to seem

perplexing, pointless, superfluous. In the first place, and this we rarely appreciate, he feels no particular need of it. It is not natural that he should. His real religion is in the big possibilities ahead of him. His immediate business being the exploration of this world, it is too much to ask of a young man that he should give much attention to other worlds. By other worlds I mean not so much other states of being, but issues beyond the issues of everyday living. To cram down a young man's throat more religion than he can assimilate has long seemed to me a disservice both to him and to his God.

Of this I can speak with some knowledge since it was at one time my duty to impart what I may call a digest of one of our doctrinal religions to adolescent lads whose bodies had grown faster than their spiritual lives had developed, and who were more aware of physical and material needs than of any yearnings of the soul. What I chiefly remember of this was what I divined as the honest, rather touching, desire of these boys for something simple, definite, practical, that

they could understand and *do*. Instead of offering them that my duty was to explain to them the nature of the Trinity, the separate functions of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—as if I knew what they were!—the mysteries implied in the Incarnation, the fortifying virtues of the sacraments. Something concerning the validity of the Scriptures was thrown in, and whatever could be added in the way of ethical injunction.

Even now I can see the puzzled, bewildered, skeptical look in those young eyes. I grew ashamed. When I think of it now I am reminded of the effort that used to be made in the early days of American æsthetic culture, perhaps thirty years ago, to offset poverty by distributing photographs of the Old Masters. Photographs of the Old Masters obviously had their place, but they were not bread. What I gave these boys might have been of some help to their fathers, men who had had time to think and be confused by their thinking; but to boys it could mean scarcely anything. Forced on

them years before they felt the need of it it is not strange that as long as they lived many of them, most of them, should suffer from that early lack of comprehension. It is true that what has been rejected in youth will sometimes prove a resource in middle age; but it is also true that in the majority of cases it does not. Rejected once it is rejected for always, leaving without stimulus that latter part of life in which stimulus is needed most.

It will not, I hope, be inferred that I am undervaluing the great Christian mysteries. Not at all! All I plead for is their reservation to the time when life naturally grows toward them. When we have suffered, when we have been tried, when we have sinned and failed and been bereaved and disappointed, we shall reach out after the eternal things as children to their mothers' breasts. When we do that, as things are now, we find for the most part only a set of phrases out of which custom has taken all the novelty and therefore most of the appeal. They have grown stale before we could use them. It is not

the novelty, of course, which gives them their significance; it is only that with new cares we seek new aids in bearing them. As it is, we assume that our remedies are inefficacious because they were once given us for ills they were not meant to cure.

It would, I think, be a relief to many grown-up people to have it clearly in their minds that in general the young are not what we call "religious" and are not intended to be so. When I say religious I mean in the way that their fathers and mothers are. What we know as the eternal verities toward which older people feel their way in proportion as life compels them to think are alien to the young, whose yearnings fix themselves upon the Here and Now. It is not that between the generations a gulf is fixed, as we sometimes say; rather it is that the cycle of their interests do not coincide. Boys of sixteen think much alike in every generation; so do men of twenty-six; so do men of sixty. In what we call religion God meets each age as it comes along. We, on the other hand, try to force the views of

sixty on the lad of sixteen, so creating confusion and distaste. The boy of sixteen has a concept of religion all his own, and of a kind to suit him. To nourish that rather than take it away from him should surely be our aim.

In that concept such truths as the fathers of the Church have defined in dogma or crystallized in creeds find little place. On the other hand, everything that makes for character looms large. Youth is for the practical. The active, the demonstrable, the average young man can understand. Some of it, at least, he will use, and be glad of doing it. The point is not to insist on too much, or on what is beyond his present ability to appreciate. Let him come to his religion as he comes to other great phases in his development, to his growth, to his education, to his advance into the life of responsibility. Of what is about him in the world he will absorb what he needs, and absorb it wisely, if too great pressure is not put upon him. Make him the subject of worry or entreaty because at twenty-six he is not occupied with the spiritual interests

of sixty, and the chances are that you will lose him. The young man is not religious in the old man's way; but he *is* religious in his own. His own way is that of conduct, of results. Its deepening and widening are most likely to come about if, in large measure, he is let alone.

XI

So I revert to my basic idea that if we are to acquire Faith we must begin at its beginning. Few of us are fitted as yet for more than the beginning. The beginning is to try to please God, as the phrase goes, in the hope that we may be blessed with some of the fruits of His infinite willingness to please us. Should this as a motive seem selfish, I can only say that the Bible is full of it. "Commit thy way unto the Lord and He shall give thee thy Heart's Desire," might be called an epitome of His promises.

As to what that Heart's Desire is He never, as far as I can see, makes too close an investigation. He leaves it to ourselves, with a splendid assumption that we can use our own judgments. Our

Lord takes the same large view of us. "Whatsoever things ye desire, when ye pray believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." There is no insistence here that our wishes shall be the wisest possible if we expect to have them granted. We are our own masters; we shoulder our own responsibilities. He is that kind of Father who stands by His son, while the son makes his own experiments. If they are sometimes unfortunate experiments that only means that he will learn.

To learn, to unlearn, to make mistakes, to correct them, and yet to be sure through it all that the Father's smile, tender, sympathetic, humorous perhaps, is following us while we work our way—that seems to be the beginning of the Faith that leads to Success. It is not afraid of the Father, except with the fear of hurting or wounding Love. In all other ways this Faith is confident, simple, not tortured with too much self-introspection, seeing God's service first of all in work well done.

CHAPTER V

A NEW HUMAN FACULTY AND A WIDER VIEW OF WORK

I

IN MODERN American and British usage the word Success is mainly employed of the professional.

A successful man is he who makes a success of his business. This may be law, medicine, commerce, or any of the arts or crafts pursued for the making of money. The amount of money made will in general be the test. Success is gauged by income, style of living, social position, and influence in a community. This influence will, as a rule, be that of cash rather than of character. Influence of character will be found, but those who exert it will not on that account be numbered among the successful. For ad-

mission there the ability to make money will, in the common estimate, be the only essential.

For this limitation on the part of peoples who rank among the most intelligent in the world there is a reason. During three or four hundred years they have been the pioneers of material world development. Not that they have been alone; they have only been persistent. France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, the Netherlands, have all had their visions of world exploitation, but from one cause or another have turned back from them. The composite races known as British and American have kept on. Material conquest has been in their blood. In all parts of the world they have felled forests, bridged rivers, built, dug, cultivated, spun, and then pushed farther onward. Always they have had in the back of their minds the thought of the extension of trade. Explorers, discoverers, teachers, men of science, and missionaries have opened up the way to the merchant. For the sake of the merchant armies have been raised, navies have been manned, wars have been fought, lives have

been sacrificed, treaties have been signed, among all the modern nations. What religion was to the Jew, what philosophy was to the Greek, what learning was to the Renaissance, business has become for Europe and America. Throughout the United States and the British Empire it is far beyond all others the predominating interest. To open up new markets, to make them secure, to keep others out of them, has become the main function of government. Art, science, literature, and religion as features of the national life loom small in comparison. Success, therefore, in the minds of these peoples is material success, and not much more.

As a human situation this was new in the early part of the 19th Century. Though trade had been a preoccupation of man since the beginning of history, it was not till steam had quickened all the means of communication between one country and another that it became the first preoccupation of all. The nations entered then into a new field for their energies. While the world was not virgin soil its resources

had been no more than tapped. Machinery had only begun to show what it would one day do with its giant powers. Electricity was barely suspected as the wizard which would transform our conditions of living.

On the night when James Watts watched the kettle boil the human race was reborn into a great new mercantile era. It was to be different from all the eras through which that race had passed in that the gates of opportunity were to be thrown open to millions and millions against whom they had been closed. The human lot was to be eased at last. Want and misery, to be sure, were not to be done away with, but they were to be greatly lessened and all the standards of living raised. While a minority became wealthy, vast numbers of those whose ancestors had lived in the most elemental poverty grew well-to-do, and nobody was quite as poor as people had been.

It is not strange, then, that this mercantile era should seem to some of us the most triumphant in man's history. In its way it is. Other eras

have had their accomplishments. They have built pyramids or cathedrals, they have given us Virgils and Shakespeares and Michelangelos. But in all of them the benefits have been for the few. The commercial phase of man's development has been the first to benefit the common man. We need not, therefore, depreciate the past in order to be proud of the present. We can, indeed, be prouder of it than of anything the past has ever done, seeing it means deliverance for so many, many millions whom the past had kept in misery. If we have been over boastful as to some of its advantages it is no more than natural. That will correct itself. As a matter of fact, a new epoch with a new incentive for development will one day make the mercantile epoch seem as inadequate as past centuries seem to us. But while it lasts we live and move in it. Living and moving in it we cannot but feel the discovery of fresh opportunity as one of the chief ends of man, and the use of it as Success.

The word began to be understood in its

present sense as the 19th Century waxed toward its victories. It is not a word with a brilliant history behind it. Generations knew it who had little use for it. It is found in the Bible but four times, and in Shakespeare about fifty. The Queen Anne writers and those of the young American Republic dealt with conditions that did not often call for it. Not till the phenomenon itself began to dazzle the eyes of the English-speaking world did a name for it become a need.

It is a writer so recent as Oliver Wendell Holmes who, to the best of my knowledge, first calls attention to the new significance of the word. In his brief life of Emerson he speaks of "Success in the vulgar sense, the gaining of money and position." But very soon after his time, possibly during his time, this vulgar sense was the only one which people recognized. To-day the mere sound of the syllables brings before the imagination the same sort of shining entry into rest which the word Heaven presented to primitive religionists.

II

Otherwise expressed, popular instinct picked up a word lying more or less idle, and made it one of the most urgent of our modern incentives to energy. The word has been accepted; the meaning which Holmes classed as vulgar now passes current with the most conservative. Success has become, with no beating about the bush, the gaining of money and position, one of the achievements most to be desired in the earthly state.

And with this popular conception we need have no quarrel except in so far as it takes up all the ground that Success is allowed to cover. It leaves no room for Success in any other form or according to any other definition. Putting a part in place of the whole, and magnifying it beyond reason, it blocks the mental horizon as the organized Churches block that of the spiritual life. It is hard to get round it or through it or back of it to discover Success in any other of its aspects.

A definition of Success different from the one commonly accepted is hard to give without changing the order of the motives for which men are supposed to do their work. That is what I dare to do. I change the order of the motives. I see Success in the first place in the work, and only in the second place in the reward. The popular method gives the first place to the reward, and only the second to the work. This seems to me to dislocate the natural way of reasoning, leading to that putting of the cart before the horse which is so often the awkward feature in our approach to life. We get neither backward nor forward because our motives are misplaced.

Of the relation between Success and work there is no need to speak. But what is work? Work, as I understand it, is that contribution to the common good which the individual has the aptitude and ability to make. From my point of view this definition is most important. Work is not a mere trade or craft or profession or bit of digging or hauling by which I can make a living.

Rather, it *is* that, but only as a consequence. As a main fact my work is *me*. It is the highest and broadest reach of my powers of self-expression. It is the biggest outlet I know anything about for my natural energies. It gives me a reason for living when without it I should be only drifting like a jellyfish. With my work to do I have a definite place in the world, and one which entitles me to respect.

But most of all it is my contribution to the common good. In that contribution lies my justification for being on earth at all. It gives me the privilege of benefiting others. I am in the advantageous position of having something to bestow. Having something to bestow it is always a matter of pride with us that what we give should please those to whom it is offered and do credit to ourselves. I have therefore an interest in life which preserves me from boredom, keeping me fresh and vigorous. In working for others there is an incitement of interest rarely found in working solely for oneself.

On the other hand, if I am working for others

I have the consciousness that others are working for me. All over the world men and women are doing things for my benefit. In the community in which I live every individual may be considered as in active service for my good. I am not asked to contribute to a social organization which is doing nothing for me. On the contrary, it is doing everything for me, and all I am asked for in return is my own contribution. Putting aside for the moment the question of money, what I receive from the united efforts of others is far in excess of anything my own labours can repay. In the conveniences of living which abound on every side others have enriched me as nothing I could ever do could possibly enrich them.

We shall never, I think, see work from the right point of view till we understand it as for the common good first of all. This does not mean that the question of pay can be neglected. Rather, I feel, it will, to some extent at least, take care of itself. Worth, on the whole, is fairly well rewarded. I do not imply that there

will be no more abuses or exploitation of the weak by the unscrupulous. I merely feel that where honest work is being done recognition will be pretty sure to follow. To this there are, of course, exceptions; but those experienced in the question of work and its reward would, I think, bear me out in saying that there are not so many who are doing good work that we can afford to overlook them. To work well involves working in the first place for the work's sake, and only in the second for what we may get out of it.

III

So I have ventured to make my own definition of Success.

Success is the full expansion of myself in work for the common good.

It is not merely that I am successful in proportion to my making the common good my aim; but the aim being so big it throws over me and into me some portion of its bigness. Someone has said that Lincoln was great as a character because his life was dedicated to the public

service. That is something like what I mean. Success by contribution must have a standard of reward different from that of Success by acquisition. It must be in the personality of the successful man rather than in dollars and cents, as we generally hope to see it paid. It would produce not so much a nation of rich men as a nation of great men. It would produce rich men too, but that would be incidental. The main reward would be in character.

It must be self-evident, I think, that Success by contribution has certain advantages over Success by acquisition only. Of these the most important perhaps is this, that Success by contribution is open to everyone, whereas Success by acquisition must always be confined to the relatively few. Just how far such Success is possible we can see by a glance at human society. There we find a small number of men prodigiously rich; a larger number rich but not prodigiously; a larger number of wealthy; a still larger of the variously well-to-do, while the enormous majority live from hand to mouth. Success by

acquisition can only be within the grasp of an infinitesimal minority. Of those whom we daily lay in graves all but an exception here and there would have to be classed among the unsuccessful.

They would probably so have classed themselves. The tragedy of this is not often noticed because it is so obscure. The victim himself seldom cares to say anything about it. He only allows it to eat at his heart. He who started out with the hopes of young manhood to raise himself and his family out of what was probably the ancestral slough of insufficient means finds at sixty, or sixty-five, or seventy that he has done nothing of the kind. He is still where his father was, and his father before him. His children are going forth as he went forth, with the chances of facing the same disappointment. This would probably sum up the lifetime of six men and women out of every ten. In our American exuberance we are apt to suppose that each generation in a family means some advance upon the last. But in actual experience this is not the case. The majority of families

keep much the same status as the centuries come and go. In a civilization by competition such as ours only the strong, who are often the unscrupulous, can fight their way to the top. The top is avowedly that narrow plateau which has only room for those who have made a great deal of money.

But in a civilization by contribution this would be changed. Once you have substituted the doing of good work for the making of money you have given a man something worthy of himself to live for. You have relieved him of an incubus which, for one reason or another, paralysed half his efforts, and have set his spirit free. He is no longer hag-ridden with the thought that to be a man he must do what he knows he has not the power to do. He gains in self-respect. He lives in a world with which he can cope and whose pleasures he can enjoy.

IV

I feel obliged to point out here that I am not speaking of a millennium or of any kind of Utopia.

I am not painting a fancy picture of the good world which may some day come to pass. My subject is the work which we do to-day, for the pay we earn to-day, only with a shift in the angle from which we approach it. There is nothing new in my suggestion, and nothing impossible, seeing that it has been the Christian ideal ever since there has been a Christian Church. The brief writings of St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. James are full of it, and doubtless their spoken words went into the subject more explicitly. The marvel is that between that time and this the Churches should have dropped it. If there was ever a subject on which we needed, in season and out of season, to have an ideal preached to us, it is that of work; but we have had nothing. Accepting the world's standard of supply and demand, with the least done for the most money, the Churches have let it go at that. As with Faith so with work, they have been too busy with other things to teach us fundamental principles.

For basically it is a question of education. At present we can say, with little or no exaggera-

tion, that all our methods are wrong. We may even suspect that when it comes to preparing young people for work we have no method. The life of work is before our eyes as a kind of scrimmage in which he who can kick hardest wins. Many of us have no more to say to a son or daughter than to dash in and kick. The schools and colleges have little to add, and the Churches are dumb. What wonder is it, then, that we have a world of unwilling, half-hearted workers, who give nothing they are not paid for, and would not work at all if they could help themselves? It is not their fault. It is the fault of the lack of an ideal on the part of those who trained them for life—in as far as any one ever did—and the blame for that must be laid on causes farther back.

There is something pathetic in the average parent's attitude toward his children when the latter are trying to make a choice of trade or profession. With the girls there is not much difficulty. If a girl means to work at all she generally knows, among the relatively few fields

into which she can enter, the one she means to attempt. Besides, there is always in the back of the parent's mind the possibility that some man may relieve her of the necessity of working by marrying and supporting her. With the boys it is different. They must work with no prospect of relief, and the job must be lifelong.

Here again there are boys who take care of themselves. From early years they know what they want to be. For them the technical, or law, or medical, or theological school does the preparatory work. But, on the other hand, there are many, many more who have no such intuitions, and face the choice of a career as helplessly as sheep. At sixteen or eighteen or twenty years of age they have no idea of what they want to do in life. If they turn to their parents they turn to those as helpless as themselves. If they had not been as helpless as themselves they, the young people, would not be purposeless just when purpose is most needed. We are sorry for them, and impatient with them at the same time; but most of all we are

sorry for the parents, and impatient with them too.

All the bewilderment seems to me to spring from a lack of education. It is not only a lack of education, but the lack of a great tradition of education which should now be running back through the centuries up to the day when St. Paul wrote the words which give the clue to all good work, "not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but with singleness of heart, fearing God." Had the Christian Church not allowed this glorious ideal to fall stillborn we might now have generations drilled in advance to the knowledge of work as contribution to the common good.

That is to say, children would be brought up from their earliest years with that conception of their future. As soon as they are able to take in the fact it would be pointed out to them that they are born into a widespread system of composite duties. Of the yield of these duties as much as they can accept is there for them to use. Any child of six or eight could appreciate

the vastness of the service which enables him to live in even a narrow kind of comfort. He gets up in the morning from a bed which somebody has made before it was ready for him to lie down in it. Before somebody made it somebody constructed it. Somebody put together the mattresses and wove the blankets and sheets. Somebody stuffed the pillows with feathers, and before that could be done somebody plucked the feathers from a bird. Somebody prepares his breakfast from ingredients which farmers, planters, sugar refiners, dairymen, millers, sailors, railway men, and all kinds of special manufacturers have brought to his mother's table. Somebody has written the books he takes to school, somebody has printed them, somebody has bound them. The clothes on his back, the hat on his head, were drawn from sources which geographically might cover half the world. In the street a trolley car awaits him which it has taxed scientific ingenuity to build and run. Everywhere he turns his life is cushioned and padded and lined with service.

He himself may be of the humblest parentage, living in the humblest way, and yet the combined good offices of others have strewn his path with luxuries that are not considered luxuries only because they are taken for granted.

When we come to think of it, there is no phenomenon more striking than this system of interrelated duties and services within which we live. No one is outside of it. Nations the widest apart are knit by it into one colossal community. Differences of language, colour, and culture affect this community not at all. A disturbance of the communal life such as that created by a war is a disaster from which it takes us a long time to recover. Our experience in the World War taught us how quickly, once this order of mutual service is suspended, the lot of the individual becomes harder. In normal conditions the ramifications of this system are enormous. We have only to think of the number of people on whom we depend for our power of living through a single day to realize what armies are employed on our behalf. Each

of us is warranted in thinking that there is scarcely an individual in the world who is not directly or indirectly doing something to make his life easier, something he would instantly miss were it to be withdrawn.

More striking still is the fact that, vastly varied as these contributions are, there are tastes and aptitudes to make them. Nothing is more amazing than the diversity of human gifts. No matter how arduous or novel the undertaking, men and women will be found to put it through. Every important new invention calls for a new kind of energy, and the new kind of energy never fails. Whether the summons is under the sea or up in the air or to the North or South Pole, men will come forward with just the equipment for the task. The older fields are always well supplied. Doctors, lawyers, teachers, carpenters, farmers, painters, plumbers, actors, sailors, soldiers, authors, motormen, explorers, chauffeurs, accountants, miners, politicians, priests—the list is endless—are always in readiness to supply the demand. Beyond all

imagination intricate and rich, the services men render to each other are the surest proof of their kinship with the Divine.

V

It is easy to be cynical here, and ascribe the services to the primary desire to make money.

Undoubtedly the desire to make money will enter into them. Undoubtedly, too, it will in most cases be the primary desire. My contention is that under proper instruction in obvious Christian ethics it would become the secondary motive, and yet a motive quite legitimate.

On this last point let us be clear. The ambition to make money and win position, called vulgar by Doctor Holmes, is perhaps our first spur to activity. Without it mankind might still be in the Stone Age. Moreover, it is through this impulse that the majority of us prove our power of being useful to the community. Our most telling contribution to the common good is through the work by which we gain a living. Of course, we do that work in the hope of making

money. To pretend otherwise would be ridiculous. I trust that nothing I have said will make it appear that I undervalue for an instant the importance of financial reward, and of any honour that may go with it.

But money can be made as easily by consciously having in the forefront of the mind the desire to do something for the common good as when money is the first and only objective. Love for our work is, after all, our surest guarantee of being able to make it pay. And if we analyse the love for our work we soon get to motives that would surprise us by their concern for the common welfare. We *want* the goods we sell, the clothes we make, the advice we give to be the best possible. Only a renegade here and there is willing to palm off the faked article, mental or material, so long as he can get the cash. The majority of us, I cannot help believing, are not only honest but anxious to give a little more than satisfaction.

Well, then, it requires but the slightest shift in the point of view to emphasize this desire,

leaving that of making money as a secondary issue. As I have said already, the making of money takes care of itself to no small degree when work is well done. It stands to reason that it should be so. Even when there are exceptions to this rule, and dishonesty exploits good intention, the wrong can be fought and righted. It is not to be supposed that by the method I suggest all the ills would be cured. But some, I think, would be lessened, and a greater peace of mind would come to those struggling to be successful. Merely to perceive that good work in itself is Success would give back self-respect to many who feel that they must either despise themselves or curse the conditions of human society.

VI

So I revert to the young or adolescent lad thinking of what he is to do in life. At present this is represented to him as a scrimmage into which he must rush and grab what he can. His Success will be rated by the amount that he can grab. I use the word grab because it describes

the process as it is in the minds of all his instructors, domestic, scholastic, and religious, and as it comes to be in his own. How he takes this necessity will depend on his own temperament.

There will always be some whose mettle will be stirred at the prospect. Some will nerve themselves to confront a duty from which they shrink but which they cannot avoid. Others, and they a great many, will experience a kind of paralysis of the will which will make it next to impossible for them to do anything. These are the lads who reach the age of eighteen or twenty with no knowledge of their own aptitudes, and no choice made. Of the young manhood of each generation they constitute an appallingly large proportion, and I cannot help the conviction that this is because the whole subject of work is presented to them in the wrong way.

In this presentation there is no appeal to the salient qualities of youth, enthusiasm, altruism, generosity. I do not deny that there are individuals who lack these traits, but in general youth is born to them. As characteristics they

are so common that we often feel the necessity of laughing such ardour down. Too often we watch with amusement while the ideals fade, and the ambitions cool to the same deadness as our own. We have, in fact, prepared a whole method of disillusion to compel the young to get over the foolish fancy that they are capable of anything in which there is even a streak of nobility.

"We were like that once, and see what it has come to."

We use this argument as if it were conclusive. We never say: "We were like that once, and hadn't the daring to live up to it."

To hear the majority of older people talk one might suppose that they failed to amount to much because there was no possibility of doing so. It is always life that plays them false, it is never they who play false to life. As a matter of fact, if they have failed it has been because their own elders in their turn beat it into them that ideals were fables which you ceased to believe when you shed the thymus gland and came to

years of discretion. We are so committed to failure that within fifty or sixty years a whole literature has risen in its praise. Begun by the Russians, it was taken up by the Germans, the French, and the Scandinavians. England was the last to drop into line, but it has done so in the end very docilely. Nearly all the clever Englishmen whom we read in America write from the conviction that nothing amounts to anything. This they preach like a gospel. Mr. Galsworthy's conclusion might represent that of most of them, that the human being is like a white monkey who sucks the fruit and throws the rind away, only to be left helplessly wondering if that is all there is to life.

The gospel of failure is in fact part and parcel of the gospel of grab, each the complement to the other. With these twin messages we are accustomed to go to our young people, bidding them earn a living on these terms. At a time when they need more than anything a stiffening of the fibre we discourage and dismay them. But what youth asks for first of all is to be made confident.

This must be with no factitious confidence; it must be with something solid and strong, on which a life can be built up. Acceptable as humbug may become in later life, boys and girls will have none of it. Not for the most vital purposes will they, as a rule, compromise on this principle.

Now, I know of nothing solid and strong but the knowledge on a young man's part that he enters into life to bring it something which it wants. Life needs him; it needs his contribution. He comes to it not as a mendicant but as a helper. Having received much from it, he comes to pay back what he can.

This seems to me one of the facts most important to impress on the mind of a growing child. Taught, repeated, instilled, it would form an ideal of work that would never be outlived. That ideal would be ready before the question of definite work arose, directing the mind subconsciously toward a choice. Childhood and youth love giving. What have I to give? would become the imperative question, and not, How

am I to snatch? It would be a higher attitude toward the whole subject of profession.

It is this higher attitude which seems to me to be the basis of Success. At present the young worker confronts a world which, he fears, doesn't want him. Were he to hang back or refuse there would be thousands to take his place. He can do nothing but what others could do as well, and has no special value. This very consciousness is a handicap. It is unnerving from the start. Making for lack of initiative, it stultifies will and energy.

Substitute for it the conviction that bringing his quota he cannot but be welcome and you introduce a new kind of force. It is a force that will have been active long before the decision must be made. What have I to give? will have been working toward its own answer through years in which the boy has seemed indifferent to serious thought. It must not be forgotten that beneath superficial carelessness young people think more actively than they are given credit for. Their own destinies interest them in par-

ticular. The very lad who in his pondering on his future career never gets farther than a series of blind alleys is often the one who thinks, and even suffers, most.

But given an ideal implanted in early childhood, the blind alley opens up. The very fact that a young fellow grows with the knowledge that at a certain time not far away he must give something to the common good helps him to see what it is he can offer. It will probably be nothing original; it may, in fact, be no more than employment in one of the established trades or professions; but, as we have already seen, the work of the world is a system so colossally complex that in carrying it on no one can be spared. It no more diminishes the value of the novice's contribution that others have been making it before him than if he were a new recruit to an army. There cannot be too many. Everyone with strength, courage, and goodwill has a place to fill which without him would be empty.

For it is a further result of this point of view that it shows us the merit of those who are filling

the most humble, humdrum, routine offices. On the principle of Success by acquisition the bulk of the wage earners of the world would be disqualified in the race. No raise in pay, however great, would enable them to compete with those who can make money on the larger scale. But the principle of Success by contribution gives them the same chance as everyone else. It puts all on an equal footing. The man who stands behind a counter is as fully able to respect himself as the banker who manipulates a hundred-million foreign loan. To a considerable degree envy is eliminated and class hatreds minimized. Where a man perceives the value of his own work, however dull and small, he more willingly concedes the value of another man's, however big and remarkable. The more it is part of the common understanding that whatever blesses one blesses all, the less place there is for jealousy.

VII

Here I must repeat that this is not idyllic or Utopian. It is simple and practical. It is not

so much a question of action as it is one of point of view. Our present system of catch as catch can is brutal and barbaric. It breeds the very things it most abhors. Just as tsarism bred the Soviets, so our civilization by acquisition begets communism, bolshevism, and other movements not much less revolutionary. A civilization by contribution would escape at least some of these since it would offer less provocation. While it would not be a cure for all our social and economic ills, it would be a mitigation of many.

It is, as I have said, a question of teaching. That which is implicit in the Christian ideal, and which has not been evoked since the days of the Apostles, would have to be brought out. There is in it so strong an appeal that I cannot help thinking that large numbers who are now troubled or dissatisfied would seize the idea gladly. If the Churches would only put into the task one tenth of the strength they now give to causes not half so important, the world would soon be converted. If homes, schools, colleges would do the same, we should have in the course

of two or three generations a new state of mind with regard to work and wealth. There is surely nothing in our present method to render us hostile to a change.

But if it is too much to expect a reformation on any extensive scale it is always possible for the individual to put the Christian ideal into operation on his own account. If we wait for the leaders in Church, State, and Education to make a concerted move, or even a move in any definite new direction, we shall wait for ever. The individual himself must always be the pioneer. I can easily imagine a young man saying to himself, "I am going to work with a twofold intention. First, I mean to pay back what I can of the tremendous obligation under which others have put me by the mass of their services to me. Secondly, I shall try to do my work so well that others shall profit by my services as I profit every minute of the day by theirs. If I can accomplish this even in part I shall consider myself successful."

There need be nothing priggish in this,

nothing smug or self-righteous. All it amounts to is the effort—in the picturesque figure with which the English have supplied us—"to play the game." It is playing the game to pay back what you owe. It is playing the game to try to leave the world even slightly benefited by your having been in it. A young New York business man, highly successful from the point of view of acquisition, once said to me, "The whole of business can be expressed as doing the other fellow before he does you." This is the other principle, and even if, in this case, somewhat baldly expressed, a principle very widely accepted. There is no need to ask any one which he considers the worthier.

It is true that the young man who starts out with the ideals of which I have spoken may find that advantage will be taken of his good intentions. But what of that? In the first place, it will teach him to protect himself; and in the second, he can have the assurance that in the long run it is right that pays. Besides which, if we stopped to count up beforehand all the

dangers and risks, we should never take an adventurous step.

VIII

Success to me personally, then, is in a wide view of the importance of our work, and in the zest with which we tackle it. The work itself may be limited in scope, it may be tedious, monotonous, even standardized, and yet if it were not of advantage to the common good we should not be called on to do it. The fact that at a given minute in his life a man finds himself just at the place where such and such would seem to be his job is in itself of the nature of a call. He is there for that purpose. He may rebel against the purpose and despise it; he may think of a dozen other purposes which he would have preferred to serve; but the fact that he is where he is determines what he must do if he would work out to Success. Whatever is in hand, big or small, distasteful or sympathetic, is the medium of our self-expansion.

That self-expansion is to my mind our Suc-

cess. The Success is in the fact. What it brings in is incidental. Money may come of it or it may not. To the main issue it is scarcely relevant. In that there is but one consideration, the goodwill with which we serve.

IX

At the same time I can understand that this principle of Success by contribution may seem to lack a stimulus which most men and women of high spirit would demand. At its best it may seem to lead to a bland monotony of excellence in which the individual would be lost sight of. What we commonly consider the tiresomeness of conditions with which no fault can be found might conceivably brood over it. Virtuous methods have never seemed to us dramatic. Many of us fear that a better world than the one we live in would be dull.

In this there may be some of the mistake which people make when they think of perfection as one blank level of sameness. It is a common remark with regard to the kind of heaven our

grandparents believed in that it would drearily lack variety. Where all bring their tribute of prayer, worship, and work, without deflection on any one's part, there must, we think, be an absence of those inequalities and discrepancies which make life as it is so interesting.

And yet in that respect nature does not bear us out. There we find in perfection a seemingly endless variety. Take, for example, the evidence of flowers. As nearly as we can recognize perfection on earth we find it among them. The rose is perfect; the lily is perfect; the violet is perfect; and yet how different the one from the other. Go through the whole kingdom of things that bloom and you will see the same ingenuity of differentiation. A single family will give you types so diverse as the strawberry and the apple tree. A single countryside will contain some forty or fifty varieties of ferns. It would seem indeed that perfection is more fertile in diversity than anything in which there is a flaw.

The same thing is true of development in perfection. As a rule we think of a perfect world

as a static world. It has reached finality. There can be no advance in it. But again the kingdom of growing things teaches us that that is not the case. Perhaps most of the flowers in our gardens are developments from simple forms. The fruits on our tables are the same. The more approximately perfect the specimen from which we start the richer the new product. Perfection is dynamic. The nearer we come to it the more fecund all our resources. On the other hand, the imperfection which we think so varied and dramatic is in reality sterile and tame. It can get so far, but no farther. It is non-productive, non-progressive. Only the right, or what approximates to the right, can unfold and unfold, and continue to unfold, till finite minds like ours are staggered at the thought of such dynamic energy.

Not that we need expect perfection, even if the world adopted the principle of Success by contribution. It would create no revolution; it would establish no change except that work on the whole would be better done, and some of the

irritations between employed and employer might be eluded. Standards would be raised and self-respect increased, but a new supply of difficulties and abuses would certainly take the place of those with which we already have to deal. But the step would be in advance. That is all I contend for. It would realize, or help to realize, one of those Christian ideals which we now ignore. It would be one more proof of a fact which we have always been slow and unwilling to admit, that the teaching of the Christ is practical. Even if society at large rejected the principle, it would at least bring those who adopted it into harmony with themselves, as well as with that Living Will which seems to direct the worlds.

CHAPTER VI

A WIDER VIEW OF WORK AND THE STRUGGLE UPWARD

I

BUT even with the acceptance of the principle of Success by contribution there still remains a difference between big work and small work, employer's work and that of the employed. There will always be some, perhaps a majority, satisfied with routine jobs, of which the payment is a wage. Others, on the contrary, will be eager to burst these limitations and reach the more commanding tasks. The fact that a man who can only do routine work may consider himself successful in doing that in no way deprives another of his right to natural ambition. What is Success for the smaller man would not of necessity be Success for one more richly endowed.

To whom much is given, of him shall much be required, is the dictum of the Wisest of us all. Many would only too willingly give more to the common good if they knew how to give it. But life would seem to have hedged them round with vetoes. Whichever way they turn the command apparently goes forth, Thus far and no farther. Factories, offices, and shops are full of chafing spirits, capable of a larger work, yearning to get at it, and yet unable, for a number of reasons, to put themselves in touch with it. Their problem is how, in spite of all the forces ranged against them, to turn ambition into action.

For this neither I nor anybody else can give a recipe. At the same time it is permissible to point out certain methods which, to my own knowledge, have helped men and women to just this kind of release. I am not offering these suggestions as infallible. They may be useless to some and yet prove of benefit to others. All I can say is what, in my own small way, has helped me.

II

Faith I have tried to show as coöperation with the Father. It is in its way an imitation of the Father. Whatsoever he seeth the Father do these things doeth the Son likewise. There is no reason why any of the sons of God should not use these words of himself, to the extent that they will apply. At least he can say, Whatsoever he seeth the Father do—that is, whatever he is absolutely sure of as being right—these things the son *tries* to do likewise. With this association his work is bound up. Work is a vital element in conduct. It is that part of our conduct by which we manifest ourselves to the world.

In other words, our work belongs to our moral life. A man cannot knowingly do slipshod work and still feel that he is in what theologians call a state of grace. The separation of the working life from the moral life is not in accordance with the highest principles of either morality or workmanship. Work is not something outside the

real and intimate self; it is bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh. Some emphasis must be thrown on this for the reason that most of us regard the two as disconnected. We have our life and we have our work. The two are apart. We must live our life so as to be upright, honourable, decent. We can do our work in any way that will pass muster. The latter will not affect the former, or render it a shade more virtuous. This is our common reasoning, a large part of our failure to be more successful being due to it.

The first step toward getting out of a small line of work into one with richer duties and opportunities is, as a rule, in associating our actual duties and opportunities with the highest things we know anything about. Some do this instinctively and unconsciously. Without philosophy or theory they go to work with lofty motives and enthusiasms. These are the men upon whom employers keep their eyes and who rise quickly. Those who would like to rise and never do, who sit and wonder why the chances that come to others do not come to them, are

those to whom work is only the boresome round by which they make a living, with no relation to the loftier aims.

Unless we are endowed with a special set of instincts we shall not, I think, see the opening of the pathway to Success until we know something of consecration to the job. By consecration I mean exactly what I say. The job, if it be an honest job, must be considered holy. It makes no difference what kind of a job it is, unless it be that the more it happens to be distasteful the holier it must become. The sympathetic job we are sure to work at pretty well. It is when we come to the task we hate, or despise, or consider beneath our powers, that we test our mettle. No one must suppose that he can go through life without at times doing work he finds disagreeable. In my own experience, the best bit of training I ever was to have came through three years of a teaching work repellent to my instincts.

It is well to remember when we have to do work which we dislike that the very doing of it hardens the mental and spiritual fibre. In

general we are too soft. The conditions of our life, especially in cities where so much is done for us, tend to make us soft. It is our very softness, our flabbiness of moral muscle, which inspires discontent and complaint when conditions of employment are not exactly to our taste. Just as military service, which probably few take up from sheer delight, helps to make men strong and straight and virile, so the job which we would never undertake if we could choose is likely to instil the very qualities of which as individuals we are most in need. Once viewed in that way I feel sure that such work must become easier. "Not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but with singleness of heart, fearing God." That is the method. Get it as an animating force in heart and mind and the whole subject of "the job" takes on another aspect.

III

That is, in association with God it is lifted up, ennobled, and enlarged. It has a purpose. Life itself has a purpose. We have some idea

why we pass through the experience of this planet, and what its pother is about. Merely to get that is, to my mind, a lantern to the feet and a light on all our paths.

What are we here for? Whence do we come? Whither are we going? Why is the life we know so positive, and all that surrounds it wrapped in so much mystery? Why do we have to work so hard, to suffer so much, to be so often grieved, disappointed, disillusioned? These are the stock questions of all the generations, and can easily be multiplied. It is the present literary fashion, as I have said, to treat them as if there were no answer, and to settle down to the white monkey's dazed bewilderment. Man, according to this teaching, is no more than a white monkey, with no power of drawing from his past any deductions which will help his future.

Now without pretending to special wisdom it seems to me that certain inferences are not only permissible but obvious. We see ourselves first of all as inhabitants of a planet in which practically everything is the result of

struggle upward. Man in particular is able to look back and trace nearly all the phases of his rise. He rose through hard fighting. The fighting instinct was one of his most primitive gifts, as it is still one of his most vital. He fought with beast and man. He fought with circumstance. Through ages longer than we can count he struggled from higher level to higher level, and yet without reaching a final one.

That the struggle is over and our development completed is part of the mistake which they who believe in our resemblance to the white monkey make about mankind. Nothing is plainer than the fact that we are still an unfinished product. In comparison with the man of five thousand years ago we have made many advances; in comparison with the man of five thousand years hence we are probably still in a kind of palæolithic age. We are therefore incapable of understanding more than a small portion of the mystery about us. But a small portion we can understand, inferring from that that a day will come when we shall see through it all.

What we can understand is this, that struggle upward is the law of life. If there is a motive for our being on this planet it is that we shall fight our way from lower stages to higher ones. This action began in ages so far back that we know little or nothing about them, and to the best of our judgment will not reach its consummation for ages still to come. But the necessity is there. Not one of us is spared it. Not only is it the destiny of the race; it is also that of the individual.

The experience of millions goes to show that the personal life can be one main process of expansion. The expansion may be irregular, with ebb and flow as the problems of adolescence, manhood, middle age, old age must be met in turn. But on the whole we observe that a broadening, heightening, deepening effect has been produced when all is done. In a world where there is so much evil it is bracing to think of the vast numbers of men and women who through much tribulation reach the hour of death purified and strengthened by their trials. If new stages of

struggle await them beyond death they will probably be fitted to enter into them.

It would not surprise me if new stages of struggle were to run through all future existence or existences. A state of being in which there is no element of striving seems oddly inadequate to creatures for whom striving is the primal law. A static life, of whatever blessedness, makes little or no appeal to us. To minds like ours nothing is more abhorrent than finality. To have nothing more to work for, nothing more to win, is a condition so alien to our human instincts that it is small wonder that the heaven described to us by our grandparents has failed to seem a place of bliss. It is impossible to separate bliss from some form of exhilaration, or exhilaration from activity. Millions of us who shrink from death as the prelude to never having anything more to do would face it with courage could we only see it as the continuation of our work. It would be our work continued in conditions of which we have no knowledge, and still it would be our work.

For the simple reader it is always essential to remember that nothing in the Bible is meant as a description of a future life. The great visions of the Apocalypse form a mystic and dramatic presentation of important truths, not a picture of conditions surrounding God. As to anything of that sort, the Bible's reserve is absolute. It is absolute concerning all the details of what we shall inherit after death. Anything we can say along those lines is in the nature of surmise, but it would be strange if two thousand years after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ we had not advanced to something to base our surmises on.

My own deduction—it is nothing more, and is offered very humbly—is that of a continuation of the struggle upward. It is not to be supposed that on passing out of this earthly phase the very best of us is fitted to appreciate the wonders of infinity. To them we should work on through ages and stages that would bring us an enhancement of existence wholly beyond our imagination now, but never coming to an end. That

is what infinity means to me, a condition in which for ever and ever and ever I can find something new to do, some new small triumph to achieve. It is always working toward God and into God, and always finding that there are new discoveries to make.

That is to say, the purpose of our life in any phase is to climb from plane to plane. Here on earth we do that largely through our joys and sorrows. If we were more advanced it might be possible to do it through our joys alone, but being as we are we need the stimulus of trouble before we are willing to learn wisdom. Trouble, suffering, disappointment, grief, have always been our teachers. They administer the discipline without which teaching generally fails to take effect.

And among these helps in the struggle the greatest perhaps is work. Of all our agencies of discipline it is the most cogent. It is drill; it is school. More than any means except religion it directs the struggle upward instead of downward. It keeps us from doing wrong. Every-

one knows how easily tempted to folly he could be were it not for the restrictions laid upon him by his job. It is a corrective to indolence, idleness, lethargy, carelessness, irregularity. For simple natures, whose training, or lack of it, has rendered them more or less elemental, there is no better brace than the daily obligation "to punch the clock." Natures more advanced will create a method of punching the clock for themselves. Many of us, perhaps most of us, would spill over, weaken, go to pieces, were it not for the rule of life imposed on us by employment.

Like many people I often find myself wishing that I could live without working any more. But the first thought is enough. The second tells me how wretched I should be. I should no longer possess a motive for living on. Collapse into premature senility would come as a relief. All of us know men who after years of much activity feel justified in "retiring." Retire is the word. Except in the rare cases in which a new interest affords occupation the "retirement" becomes no more than a weary waiting for death.

We have all seen this. Watching it we become more content with the necessity laid upon us to toil on. To plod to the office, to stand behind the counter, to cook the three meals a day and wash up after them, all the tasks so tiring that every now and then we feel as if we hated them, become God-sent and beautiful the minute we think of what we should be without them.

IV

Here I must allude to a subject as to which I know little and will say less. If the purpose of our passage across this planet is that we may grow upward and expand, then the work by which this end is served must, of course, be honest and righteous work. Of that there is enough in the world to allow one to speak in generalities. There is, however, plenty of dishonest and unrighteous work to which the things I have been saying would not apply, or would apply only with reservations. But dishonest work is outside my scope. My subject covers only the kind of work in which there is

some power of self-perpetuation. Dishonest work is, and must be, sterile. While I admit the importance of discussing it, especially in a mercantile era like the present one, it cannot be done here.

V

Knit into the moral texture of the life, a brake on our tendencies to go wrong, work is worth being made the biggest thing within our power to grapple with. Whatever his present task, a man of spirit is always dreaming of, and aiming at, something which will give a fuller outlet to his energies. The question arises, then, as to how this can be found.

All I can do here is to suggest the method which I myself have tested to a point which convinces me that with some degree of judgment it will be successful.

The first enlargement of work seems to me to be won through the power of Imagination.

This, of course, is easy to say, but to many it will appear difficult of application. Their only idea of Imagination is that of a faculty that runs

to the fanciful. Most work has little to do with the fanciful, but much with concrete facts.

Imagination, as I conceive of it, is that power which enables us to see, not only concrete facts, but everything round about them. No fact stands alone. It is engendered by some other fact. There is, for example, a fact of plumbing. But the fact of plumbing is created by the fact of a house, and the fact of a house by the fact of a builder, and the fact of a builder by the fact of lumber, and the fact of lumber by the facts of lumbermen and trees. But that is only one series of such facts. There are other facts even more important. Traced along different lines, the fact of plumbing implies the fact of a house, and the fact of a house the fact of an owner, and the fact of an owner the fact of a family, and the fact of a family the fact of health, and so you can go on. What I mean is that all work is related to some other work. It is part, as we have seen, of a vast coöperative system, linked with everything everywhere.

Now a man with Imagination comes to see

some of these connections. He sees at least the immediate ones. He knows what leads up to his job and what depends on it. He knows its significance. If it is only the driving of a certain screw he works out the relation of that screw to the machine. Imagination shows him the machine and the value of his own contribution.

But here again we are likely to divide mankind into two classes, those who have Imagination and those who have none. My own conviction is that to the latter class nobody belongs. Some may have more of the imaginative faculty than others, but all have some of it. It is often repressed, it is often starved; it is even nearly atrophied. But the root is for ever in the nature, waiting only for a kindly opportunity in order to make something grow.

And that kindly opportunity does not of necessity come from outside of us. That too we have at our command. More than in any other way we stir the Imagination by our *thinking*. Around what we think of, the Imagination always begins its work of enlargement. That

is its supreme use. It is never content to shuffle up and down on one spot. Taking what we are thinking of, it weaves a margin of causes and effects, like a penumbra round the moon.

But thinking is the stimulus Imagination needs. Where there is no thinking it has nothing to work on. If it makes us no suggestion about our work it is because we do not supply it with the preliminary Thought. Thought is what Imagination feeds upon. It not only feeds on it, but it gives it back extended, expanded, and amplified. All it asks is the thinking. The more interest there is in the thinking the more active the imaginative faculty will become, explaining, proposing, revealing.

Nor do we have to sit down and say, Now I will use my imaginative faculty. Imagination works automatically, once the Thought has been provided. We need make no effort; we need not give it attention; especially we should avoid self-consciousness. Once we have the Thought, Imagination will come to our aid uninvited.

Like every other faculty it needs training. It needs correction and guidance from the Reason and Memory. But given these it will easily prove itself one of our best friends.

VI

The strange thing is that beings like ourselves, endowed with mind, should furnish it so little of what it asks for. Thinking is a process from which the majority of us turn with a kind of terror. That we should do so is an indication of our present low development. Having mind we are afraid of it. A large part of our effort is spent in avoiding the use of it. To avoid the use of it we follow each other like sheep. In politics, religion, fashion, you can lead millions of us by the nose. Much of our public and private entertainment is carefully planned so as to throw the act of thinking off the track before it can get under way. Much of the demand for excitement, perhaps not more insistent now than it has always been, comes from the same motive. There is almost no trouble we will not take in

order to elude this most spontaneous of our functions.

For this reason so many of us are poor, so many incompetent, so many spiritless, so many doomed to be not better than our fathers. All through history, and all over the world, the unthinking have become the victims of those who were clever enough to exploit them. Over and over, from the most ancient times, it has been shown us that a handful of those who think can enslave a nation that will not use its mind. Then, when, as in France a hundred and thirty years ago, or as in Russia at this minute, the sluggish mentality is driven by suffering to move at last, it moves with that wild ferocity of misguided strength in which it is hard to discern between the evil and the good.

But the point is that thinking makes the man. Where you have not got a man you have only a machine, more or less accurate, more or less untrustworthy, as the case may be. We hear much of an age of machinery in which the human being is subordinated to the soulless instrument; but

if men thought, it would not be so. We get what we deserve. If so large a portion of the population of the country is fit for no better than to feed a machine, that is all it has the right to expect. Machinery was invented to take the place of mind. Had the great mass of workers used their minds they would doubtless have found some more human way by which their work could have been done. Machinery is not the only method of intensified production that could have been thought out. If the world has so generally had recourse to it, it is because with a mindless people it was the best that it could do.

But it is always open to the individual to take the course which the majority refuses. When he does that the way opens up of its own accord. Of this the innumerable tales of office boys and country boys who have risen to high positions is sufficient proof. These are not fairy tales. In nine cases out of ten they are true histories. But these office and country boys did not go upward because they were full of gas like a child's balloon; it was for the reason that,

even as boys, they were thinkers. Many a lad has owed the first steps of his rise to a bit of quick-witted action that has shown him capable of other things. But a bit of quick-witted action does not stand alone in any one's life. It is only a sample of the whole. Where the stream of thought is not steady it is not forthcoming. When it is forthcoming it is because, for a long time back, Thought has stirred Imagination, till Imagination has leaped into Act.

Any individual is free to think of his work, and to see it enlarged as he looks on. But thinking of his work is not mere concentration on its technical ways and means, though it will be that, and that perhaps in the first place. It will also be thinking of its significance, what it proceeds from, what it is for, what its contribution to the common good. There will be nothing about it that he will not try to make plain to himself, getting its bearings by heart.

And right there the Imagination will come to his assistance with suggestion. New ideas will occur to him, new possibilities. With a busi-

ness of his own he may put some of them into execution; with a business in which he is only an employee he has them in readiness in case they should ever be called for. If they are never called for, it is still an advantage to possess them, since they expand his mind of themselves.

And there is perhaps the whole secret. It is the stored and ready mind which is our prime essential to Success. Without it no Success was ever won. It may be a mind stored and ready in a wide and general way, or it may be only in one way, the way of a man's particular work. That is secondary. What is first is the mind's activity. The shops and factories and offices teem with men and women groaning at their lot, who will not take the single step that would better it. Luck, chance, accident, are the only means of Success to which they attribute power. They never realize that the power is in themselves through the simple force of *caring*. To care enough about one's work to think of it! To take it in thought away with one from the place where it is done! To mull over it, as the

saying goes! To think out possible means by which it could be improved, even if it is only to abandon them as impractical! Not everything the Imagination will suggest is practical. Pouring out of its abundance it leaves us to judge of that. But the value of thoughts is not always in their usefulness; it is in our having them. The mind that thinks will think a great many things, good, bad, indifferent, but better to think wrongly than not to think at all. The very capacity for doing so is the key that opens the everlasting doors.

Though I have spoken of caring I am not so inexperienced as to suppose that everyone can *like* the job on which he is engaged. That must be as it happens. But whether he likes it or not he can do it as if he did. It is akin to that love of God which the Saviour showed to be not in emotion but in act. The less he likes it the more he will probably need to think of it, making it dear by turning it over and over in his mind.

To do this with regard to work we do not like, and which is probably enriching others more than

it is ourselves, is not easy. There are, however, a great many people for whom it is made easier by seeing it as their own contribution to the common good. With some it would not be so; but in spite of all our weaknesses there is in the normal human being a generosity which makes public service a spur to his highest energies. Seen as public service, many a man's work which now seems small to him, and perhaps contemptible, would take on itself the largeness and dignity which are in themselves the first notes of Success.

Nor is any one excluded from this effort by a lack of education. "If I only had the education!" is the excuse often brought forward by a man in defence of his own failure. It is true that education is a help. It is also true that certain kinds of work cannot be done without it. But instances are common of men who swing their own portion of the world's big undertakings, and who are almost illiterate. To get the aid of the imaginative faculty but one thing is needed, the mind's activity. The dulled mind

will do nothing in any walk of life. To the mind that thinks, that thinks again, that thinks spontaneously and because the habit of thought has become assured, the world's possibilities are open. It will be offered more than it can grasp. It will, in fact, grasp but a few of these possibilities, but a few will be sufficient for a lifetime.

Such a mind will educate itself. It may not do it deeply or broadly, or with a scholar's finish, but it will do it well enough for its own purposes. There are, of course, aids to thinking, and other aids to thinking rightly, but this is not a text-book on the art. All I am eager to emphasize is the fact that the man who will not use his mind will go through his life adding figures, or driving screws, or measuring something by the yard, while he who cares enough about his work to carry it in his heart even when he doesn't like it will get the opportunities.

So I repeat and repeat again, with all the force I can put into the words, that without thinking of, and caring for, one's work, whatever its nature, and wholly apart from the emotional

sentiment we call liking, Success is not possible. On the other hand, given this merging of oneself in an ideal for the common good, given devotion in the very small measure of a grain of mustard seed, there is no limit to what may happen. It is part of that "All things are possible to him that believeth" which has proved to be one of the potent sayings of mankind.

CHAPTER VII

THE STRUGGLE UPWARD AND THE LIGHTS ALONG THE WAY

I

"ALL things are possible to him that believeth."

It will be noticed that in these words there is a width and indefiniteness which make them capable of several interpretations. They contain lower and higher strata of significance, explaining much in the way of Success and Failure which is otherwise perplexing.

It is a question not only of what is believed in but of what constitutes believing. All things are possible to him that believeth. There is merit apparently in the act of believing itself. In the act of believing itself we find something positive, robust. In disbelief there is negation,

the temper that doubts, hesitates, lets the opportunity go by. It is probably no more than just to say that of the things accomplished in the world most are wrought by the sanguine, the confident, the minds that look up and anticipate the best. They *believe*. They believe in themselves and in the task in hand even if in nothing more.

But it is something. Experience shows us that a belief that goes no farther, or very little farther, than this will often produce gigantic results. All things, or many things, on which the heart is set will prove possible to even this measure of assurance. In the material development of the British Empire and the United States this measure of assurance has been seen time and time again to brace the strength, to put the mind on the alert, to fire the Imagination. It would be easy to give instances in which the belief in a few stout hearts has borne up against all the opposition of the feeble and discouraged, and won out. Far from being rare instances, they would be commonplaces in

the careers of traders, explorers, soldiers, sailors, immigrants, and engineers. In our own individual lives most of us can recall occasions when all seemed lost but belief, and belief in the end had its victory.

This is what I may call the lower stratum of the meaning in the Nazarene Master's words, but it is lower only in the sense that the others are so much higher. Merely standing by itself it has its force. Simply to believe in what we are doing, in its usefulness, in its value, nerves arm and brain, intention and fulfillment. That is a great deal. The methods of explaining it are simple. Such a belief is inspiriting. It puts heart into the worker; it breeds enthusiasm. All the optimisms some of us are shy of, while others regard them with distrust, spring naturally in the breast of one who believes that what he is doing is worth while, and that he is the man to do it. Such a man is already on the highway to Success.

And yet I like to see more in it than that. He who coöperates with Power coöperates with

God. With the fact that God is Love and that he who dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God we are familiar; but we do not so often see the Father as Strength, as Force. And yet everyone, it seems to me, who takes part in the great activity which binds human society together is taking part with God. The Holy Ghost, with His "diversity of gifts," is man's essential working inspiration. A concept of God, expressingly only one aspect of God, is that of Dynamic Energy, everlastingly throwing out new forms, repeating the old forms, glorying in an infinite diversity some of which we can see while more we can only guess at. If, then, the Son does whatsoever he sees the Father do, Dynamic Energy ought also to belong to him, and this is what we find. We have already touched on the marvellously intricate system of efforts on which human society subsists. Faulty as they are, mere broken reflections of a matchless ideal, they constitute our repetition of Almighty Dynamic Energy in such degree as we can make it. To my mind they are that even if they are

that unconsciously to ourselves. Just as all right love is connected with the God Who is Love whether we are aware of it or not, so all energy is connected with the God Who is Energy, however little the energetic may associate themselves with Him. It is not the thinking of it which creates the association, it is the fact. Thinking makes use of the association, but the association is there however little we may know it.

So I like to believe that all Success is due to the God whose Creation was "very good" from the beginning. Energy does not work independently of God; it works with Him. This explains, for me at least, why men of great activity achieve their great results with, as far as one can judge—and I admit that the judgment may be presumptuous—little or no conscious thought of Him. With little or no conscious thought of Him they nevertheless believe. It is a blind, inarticulate belief, not rising to belief in God, and yet a belief in something. Perhaps it might be termed a belief in Strength, which, after all, brings us back again to God.

"All things are possible to him that believeth." We might add to that the clause that they are possible to him that believeth "that they *are* possible," and not be very far wrong. Much of the most commanding achievement in the world would seem to have been built up on that conviction; much of our private determination, doggedness, tenacity. As far as it goes it is good, but it must be evident to most of us that it does not go all the way.

II

If belief has power in itself it cannot but have greater power in proportion to the Truth, Strength, and Love of that which we believe in. Here we find ourselves face to face with the concept of the Father, and must ask ourselves again what it is that constitutes belief in Him.

Once more I can speak only out of my own experience. I can say what belief in the Father means to me; I cannot say what it means, or ought to mean, to any other man. There are acknowledged authorities ready to do this; and

if I presume to say a word on matters as to which these authorities have uttered their sentences long ago, it is only because the individual has always something to contribute where other individuals are concerned.

What the Father means to me first of all is, I think, the fact that I take Him for granted. Fortunately, most of us do that. If we are mystified by some things which the Bible and religion tell us about Him, we still can assume that He is here, there, everywhere. Especially we can feel assured that He is where we are ourselves. As to this we find no place for argument. It is not that we find that no argument is possible; there is only none for us. Others may dispute the question as to whether or not there is a Father; for us such dispute is impossible. To a degree which contents our souls we know. When we say that we believe, it is not that we sum up in the word an accumulation of guesses. It is that all our instincts, all our intuitions, all the knowledge we gain by the sixth and seventh senses, have brought us to a stage of conviction at which

denial has no longer an effect. This is not a refutation of argument. It is not in the domain of argument at all. It is so far from being a rebellion against reason that reason, in the sense of worked-out logical conclusion, has scarcely anything to do with it. All that we can say of it is that it is the belief which transcends mental or earthly polemics. Belief might be considered a weak word for it. *We know*. We cannot tell how we know. We are only sure that we do.

Starting, then, with this acceptance of the Father, we find that Imagination plays round the ideal, and rises into Faith. Faith is perhaps the means through which belief gets its practical application. If all things are possible to belief, Faith supplies the method by which the possibility is worked out. It is that which makes it a force which we scarcely know how to place or catalogue. To the scientific mind, up to recently, at any rate, it has seemed an irregular force, sporadic, unaccountable. Somewhat grudgingly the scientific mind has admitted that in extraordinary cases, like those of the Christian

martyrs, or Joan of Arc, or Christopher Columbus, Faith could be a stimulus outside the known laws; but only within recent years has it shown a disposition to regard it as having a vital and legitimate place among the human energies. Even the Christian mind, taken as a whole, has done little more than that, with the result that Faith as a working power, available to every man for his most commonplace concerns, is known to relatively few. Relatively many would be glad to make fuller use of it if they knew more exactly what it is.

Very imperfectly I have tried to show that, as I understand it, it is not a form of will power, or any kind of *tour de force*. It is a matter of coming into touch with God. We may do this doubtless in as many ways as there are Churches to set them before us. With an Infinite Being there cannot, I should think, be a single "true and only" way. There must, one ventures to say, be as many approaches to Him as there are children of His to approach. In suggesting, therefore, a means by which we can prepare our-

selves for Faith, I am far from hinting that it must be adopted if we are to come to Faith at all. It is only the means which I myself have adopted because I could see no other.

Its essence is in act. Emotion has little part in it. If what we call dogma has a part, it is a very simple one. To be in touch with God I know of only the threefold way I have tried to describe already: To make one's conduct as right as one can down to the smallest detail; to pray—to pray in any way that one can—but to pray with the prayer which is association of the mind with God, in the manner St. Paul calls "instant"; to worship with the worship that has no dependence upon choirs and services, but consists in the effort to be worthy.

III

But Faith itself is something other than all this. This is only the dressing of the ground out of which Faith may spring. Above it, out of it, Faith soars straight and strong, as the lark above the meadow, or the palm tree from the sand.

Faith, except in its incipient stages, is not action. It is confidence. It is assurance. It is knowledge. It is power. It is constructive, inspiring, commanding, because it refuses to stop at anything short of God. Sprung from earth, out of these elemental hearts of which we know the perversities so well, it goes boldly behind the veil which, to our mortal sense, enshrouds the Holy of Holies, taking there its everlasting place. Memory and Reason deal chiefly with the things our senses can cognize. Even Imagination does not venture far beyond them. Faith cognizes everything on earth, and yet sweeps up and on and out into the Infinite carrying with it all our cares, loves, ambitions, and anxieties, and laying them before the Will of God.

It is in this way that Faith becomes a new faculty for man, a new asset in what he has to reckon on. Imagination, active since the Cro-Magnon days, and perhaps long before, carried him far; Faith takes him upward to where there are no limitations to Love and Power. Faith

is eager; it is restless; it is full of the determination not to relinquish anything till the divine Will has purified it and brought it to Success. Success is Faith's objective; the purpose for which it exists. Imagination could only suggest; Faith can carry out. Incompleteness it holds in abhorrence; failure even more. All the poor little human aims and wishes, yours and mine, so pitiful, so shameful they can be at times, are the objects of its loving care. To see them cleansed of their pettiness and viciousness, to see them tended and trained and brought to fruition, these are the ends with which Faith springs in our breasts and makes its way toward God.

It must never be forgotten that Faith is dynamic. It cannot stand still. It cannot suffer us to stand still. Till we come into successful touch with God it strives with us, and strives. That is in a way its charm, its beautiful relentlessness. It will never leave us or forsake us till we ourselves drive it forth and abandon it. When it is only a little Faith it will still stand by us. When it has dwindled to less and less it will

stand by us still. Even Faith as a grain of mustard seed will say to this mountain, Be thou removed and be thou cast into the midst of the sea, and it shall be done. There are smaller degrees than a grain of mustard seed, and Faith in such quantity, the quantity we know best, will still accomplish what look to us like miracles. Not till all Faith is gone, a condition which, I think, must rarely occur with any one, will this lovely, bracing Energy, both human and divine, finally give us up.

IV

I suppose the true basis of Faith is that which is implied when the Saviour said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." This is another way of coupling the Divine and human Energies, showing the one to be a repetition of the other. The idea seems to have been dear to that special Son of Man who was also Son of God, since in different words He expresses it more than once. To be for ever at work would seem to be one of the Eternal Impulses. Painfully and unwillingly,

the human race puts forth at least some attempt to make that impulse its own. It is always at work. The Son is always doing whatsoever things he seeth the Father do. Into that Sonship each one of us is caught up, his work being caught up with him. The nearer he can come to making his performance an imitation of that one Supreme Right which he sees in the Father the more surely Success appears.

The more surely, too, he can believe in his Success. He is not only encouraged; he becomes aggressive. He is working in coöperation with the greatest of all Powers, so that failure is past thinking of. In coöperation with the greatest of all Powers there could never be anything but Success. The degree of Success will depend on the degree of the coöperation. In perhaps the majority of cases the degree of coöperation is slight, and therefore the reward is slight. Where it is more extensive, the reward will be more extensive. If it could be complete the reward would be complete. I often think that that early, unknown part of the life of the Christ in Galilee was

spent in acquiring this secret. It explains, I think, His reply to His parents, when as a boy He had been left behind at Jerusalem. "Did ye not know that I must be about my Father's business?" To learn to work with the Father, and so to do the Father's work, was His mission first of all. The more we are consciously "about the Father's business" the more successful we must become.

Of this Success the rewards will be varied, and no one can predict what they will be. They may come in money or they may not. They may come in fame or they may not. One might say that there are as many varieties of reward as there are varieties of the work, and each will get more or less of that on which his heart is set. We must cease to identify Success only with money and position. There are thousands of men and women in the world who would rather write a good book or paint a good picture, or act a great rôle, or achieve something else in the line of public service, than have all the money of the millionaires. What we can say with confidence

is that the Success which comes out of coöperation with God will be surely in the line of what expresses and expands us best. *We* shall be the Success, in our characters, our personalities, our capacity to fill a useful place. Not in the canting sense of the phrase, I feel sure we can count on getting "what is best for us." By best I mean what is most to our taste, most in accordance with the things we are striving for. If it is for money we shall make it. If it is to write a good book one day we shall write one. If it is to be an efficient servant of the public, that we shall become.

But these are what might be called the higher ambitions. There are all sorts of humble ambitions, in each of which there is the same pride in the doing of good work which we find where the work is more striking to the eye. We have all noticed the flush of pleasure that will come to the cheek, let us say, when you compliment a waiter on his deftness, or a cook when you praise her *plat*, or the choreman when you speak of the neatness of his cellar, or the bootblack when you like the

blacking of the boots. All these simple offices have their place in human health and comfort, and so in God's vast plan. They are part of the Father's business just as much as the preaching of sermons or the being dean of a cathedral. It is our habit to limit the Father's business to the philanthropic and the ecclesiastical, when as a matter of fact every one of us is engaged in it. The man who sits all day at a desk, the woman who scrubs and sews, the fellow who marks off his day by the blow of a factory whistle, the labourer who digs in a ditch; all, if they only knew it, are about their Father's business in that they are doing something for the common good and at the same time struggling upward. "All service," as Browning says, "ranks the same with God." There is a Success for every one of them. There will be some share of Success even for those who do the job lifelessly, thinking of no employer but a boss. For those who take the larger outlook there will be satisfactions I could not set down in words, most of which I do not know, because they form the in-

timacies between the Father and the particular Son who works with Him. We never fathom the satisfactions of any other heart, not any more than any one else can ever fathom ours. Some of them may be guessed at; some of them we may reveal; but the deepest, and perhaps the truest, we keep between ourselves and Him whose function it is to grant them. What we can know and be convinced of is that everything done for the common good is done for Him, and that a proper measure of Success, often an amazing measure of Success, will lie at the end of it.

V

Not that I suppose that God appoints every little task, and destines one to be a farmer, another a floorwalker, another a judge of the Supreme Court, and another a chauffeur. These things He seems to me to leave to human working out, giving us a large liberty in our doing so. Having established the principle of our struggle upward, He allows us to use our own methods of struggling. We must find our own way. We

must accept our own responsibilities. Even if we make mistakes, commit sins and crimes, suffer and make each other suffer, we must learn for ourselves those lessons which alone can do us any good. Thus we create a civilization full of injustices and inequalities, senseless often, and more or less topsy-turvy at all times, but the best civilization which our present degree of development enables us to produce. It is better than the one that used to be; it is probably rudimentary and barbarous in comparison with that of future generations. But it is ours. We have wrought it. We have wrought it not under divine supervision, but with divine help whenever we have asked for it.

This distinction is very important to grasp. One of the most perplexing questions men ever put to one another is, Why did God make such a world as this? If He is Almighty, why did He make such a poor job of it, forcing us to pay the penalty? The reply is that He didn't make it. The job is not His but our own. A struggle in which we were taken care of and always pro-

tected from harm would not be a struggle at all. We should learn nothing from it. We should make no progress. We should for ever remain in an infantile stage of development. If God were to shield us more than He does we should never grow into men. Hard work, suffering, unhappiness, are not the worst things that could come to us. These are our tribulations, and the exact meaning of tribulation is often pointed out. The *tribula* is the Latin *flail*. The process of the Latin *tribulatio* was that of winnowing the chaff from the wheat. It was a beating process, persistent and severe. When it was said that "we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of heaven"—that is, rise to our highest levels—it was meant to be through the winnowing of hard knocks. We give them to each other, we give them to ourselves, because, as we are at present, there is no other way.

But in all this God is with the individual who invokes His aid. He did not create our trials, sicknesses, and sorrows; but when in the course of the struggle we have brought them on our-

selves He comes to us with the courage to work through and out of them. He did not select one man to be a lumberman, and another a prime minister, and a third a footman, fixing his destiny on each; but when in the course of the struggle we ourselves had caused this distributing of gifts He comes to each with the inspiration for the swinging of the job. Though we cannot saddle Him with the miseries for which we alone are accountable, He on His part can always be used as the great alleviation.

Faith is the agency by which this is understood. Faith goes out, as it were, from us to God, and brings this knowledge back to us. We often speak of it as if it were a queer, blind force to believe in which some of us have managed to screw ourselves up, and even to be fanatical about it, when in reality Faith and fanaticism have nothing to do with each other. Whatever fanaticism may be, Faith is sober, patient, painstaking, and reflective. It is an immense enlargement of man's gifts. Where once we had only Memory, Reason, and Imagination with

which to face our tasks, we now have this superb resource which links all we do with the Infinite Energy and Intelligence. It is a noble reach for a nature as capricious as our own; and it could never have been attained to without the direct experimental daring of Jesus of Nazareth. Among the many things for which we owe Him gratitude and loyalty this is not the least. What more there is to aspire to in this earthly phase it is difficult to imagine, though there still remains the task of bringing this tremendous power into active play.

VI

Except on the smallest scale this has never been done. As I have said already, it has never been taught. The Father's coöperation with the Son's endeavour has not been stressed, because the Son's endeavour has not seemed of much importance. Considering the part work has always taken in the world this cannot but be strange. Yet there is the fact. Only by the Apostles has it ever been seen as involving the

greatest issues of man's life. Since it has had to be done it has been done, but it has been done outside the passionate interests and controversies which from time to time have shaken both Church and State, and especially the Church.

In other words, the cares of the State have been political, those of the Church ecclesiastical. For those who supported both of them there was almost no consideration so long as they "submitted." To work and "submit" was the worker's rôle, no matter what became of him. If, moved by his sufferings, some kindly person attempted to ease his lot, the best that could be thought of was the almshouse and the dole. No one ever told him that in himself was a faculty that could coöperate with God and make of him a man. No one ever told him that with God on his side, or when he himself was on the side of God, he could hold up his head and be independent. Faith was in submission, and in nothing else. When you ceased to submit you "lost your Faith." You might follow the Master's example till you healed the sick and gave

sight to the blind as He did. But if you did not "submit" you would still have "lost your Faith," and be held as a renegade. Faith as a remedy for what we suffer from most, what we have always suffered from most, our economic ills, has never been thought or spoken of.

Personally I see no tremendous gain in bringing to the poor what are known as "spiritual consolations" if you show them no way of escape from their poverty. By a way of escape I do not mean sympathetic or economic counsel, the presentation of a load of coal, or the occasional finding of employment. I mean the discovery in themselves of the spiritual power which lies in Faith and which will cope with all their needs. The poor have had the gospel preached to them now for nearly two thousand years, and except for such mitigation as new material resources have brought to them, their poverty is as sodden as it ever was. There are Churches which glory in the title of Churches of the Poor, but what pride can there be in such a name when the human lot is not

eased? I repeat that I do not refer to the easing of that lot by economic means. "The weapons of our warfare," St. Paul writes, "are not carnal but spiritual, yet mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." Because these strongholds have never been pulled down, because no attempt to pull them down has ever yet been made, we have the brutal struggles between capital and labour that we see to-day.

For the Churches of Christ this seems to me a far more imperative question than those on which they have so frequently fought and divided, doctrines and church government. There we find the sparks that have kindled their most inextinguishable passions. Whether ecclesiastical rule should be vested in a Pope, or in a Convocation of Bishops, or a Synod of Presbyters, or what not; whether baptism should be by immersion or pouring; whether the Body of Christ is physically present in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or spiritually only, these, and such as these, have been the disputes which century after century have convulsed Christen-

dom. When we think of the neglected spiritual resources at the command of the Churches it is pitiful. I am not so presumptuous as to suppose that they should have taught the simple ideas which occur to me; but something at least on the vast subject of work as a medium of relation between the Father and His children should have been brought into the foreground. But, as I have said before, the Churches have been so engrossed with the problems of their own leadership as to have neither time nor desire to think much about human welfare. If by following their instructions "souls could be saved" for Eternity, it scarcely mattered what became of them during Time.

VII

Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that it is both cheap and easy to criticize the Churches which have almost no power to defend themselves. Of all great human institutions the Church, if you can speak of it as a unit, is now the one with least capacity to hit back.

Once it was not so. For saying the things that I have been writing, and which form the commonplaces of our newspapers and magazines to-day, a man could be put on the rack or burnt at the stake, as many men were. Progress has been made in that case, if in no other. The Churches have lost the desire to do anything of the kind, and would nowadays rather be crucified themselves.

And crucified they are. Because of a certain slowness, a certain unwieldiness, a certain hesitation to be up with every new fashion and theory only too likely to pass, we hang them on crosses. Then we pass by reviling and wagging our heads. "Ye saved others, yourselves ye cannot save." Neither can they. It is part of their mission to be ill spoken of and yet to be patient; to be stoned, tormented, sawn asunder and utter no cry. With admirable dignity they are doing it. While we all take a fling at them they show no resentment that I ever heard of, going calmly on their way of doing good according to their lights.

And that they do do good no one can deny. In that respect no other institution or group of institutions can begin to rival them. Whatever salt there may be in this world to preserve it from rotting comes from their mines more than from any other. Schools and colleges do good; so do inventive and scientific research; but theirs is another kind of good. The good instilled by the Churches is in the inner man, providing him with motives and impulses he could not get elsewhere.

What together they represent is man's farthest upward reach in the way of an ideal. But like all other ideals it is in the hands of weak and imperfect men to carry out. The men fail, or are only partly successful, but the ideal remains what it was.

In our criticism of the Churches that is something to remember. What we are complaining of is the inability of men no more highly developed than we are ourselves. Popes, bishops, presbyters, deacons, ministers, all who have the administration of the Churches in their

hands, have but reached the stages of the era in which they were born. The ideal is as far beyond them as the highly civilized life in Cannes, where I am writing these words, would be beyond the grasp of the savage from the Australian bush if he were suddenly set down in it. Their mistakes and oversights are probably not less flagrant than those of the bushman would be were he required to lead the life of the great villas and dine at the Café des Ambassadeurs. Yet each generation does what it can, and doubtless succeeds a little better than the last. Certainly, each generation is trying to succeed, and if errors and failures are many, it is no more than can be said of all other undertakings. If the Churches could only acknowledge that they are faulty experiments in religion, made by earnest but unfledged men, and not institutes of perfect and final truth, their situation would be improved. They would then be in the lead, with science, education, art, and commerce in all its branches following behind them. It is putting themselves out of the

category of effort and claiming a place of unique and divine authority as so many little Vicars of Christ—and I use the adjective little of every one of them—that makes them the target for criticism, and sometimes for hatred and scorn.

And yet the very fact of claiming too much is part of the undeveloped condition of generations of very human men. Since it is obvious that they are not fulfilling the ideal, and never have fulfilled it, I think that in a few more generations they will not claim so much. In the ideal itself there are no claims at all except to Spiritual Power. When that is more manifest, human claims, we may venture to hope, will drop into the background, and be finally sloughed away.

I feel it necessary to risk these observations in order to make it clear that such reflections on the Churches as I make throughout this book are far from being strictures on that teaching of Jesus Christ which is the only Church I can understand. That there should be some sort of simple organization to carry the teaching out

I can see well enough, and if there are failures to be noted there they are those of the men in temporary charge of the work. Before this essential Church, or this spirit of a Church, I bow down in reverence. With regard to the men in charge, whatever the century, I have my reservations. At the same time I think it cannot be denied that on the whole, through many hundreds of years, they have carried out their work with notable devotion. Lapses, omissions, errors, with pride and passion above all, can be counted up against them, but in the main they have been fairly true to that portion of the great ideal which they saw. They did not see the whole of it any more than we do. They probably did not see as much. If we are not developed, they, as you go back into the centuries, were less developed still. But with all their drawbacks and disabilities, they kept aflame a flickering light which some day may lighten the world. No other institution can show such a record. Beginning with the primitive organization of which all existing organiza-

tions are schools, it has maintained this record for two thousand years. In spite of attacks from without and betrayals from within, it has been true to its aim with comparatively little deflection. Like a great ship, partly disabled, with mutiny on board, and plunging through a hurricane, it keeps headed toward its port of destination, where somehow it will land its passengers.

VIII

If I say these things it is not by way of digression. Still less am I dragging them in without reference to my theme. It is to the Churches we owe anything we know about Faith, and indirectly all we know about Success. That is, the Churches have given us our grounding in many things which remain precious even when we have discarded them. It does not follow that because we have discarded them they were of no value to us at all. On the contrary, many of us will acknowledge that the religious ideas in which we were brought up have proved them-

selves a perpetual heritage, however much we have modified or rejected them. This is more than the effect of early training. Generally, if we are fair, we can see the Eternal Good behind them, though we ourselves, mistakenly or not, have turned to something else.

It is this Eternal Good, through all its ups and downs and fluctuations, which continues to be the stand-by of society. It is what keeps the Churches headed in the right direction when otherwise they might drift out of the course, or founder in mid-seas. It interpenetrates our social system as oxygen interpenetrates the air. No one is free from it. A man brought up in its abhorrence would still be under its spell because he couldn't get away from it. Those who are most hostile or bitter or scornful toward it are permeated by its force, for the reason that they have been born and bred in it. Without it, it is impossible to grow up in any of the countries we include under the name of Christendom. You don't have to say, This I owe to such and such a book in the Bible, or this to the

decrees of the Councils of Ephesus or Trent. You only have to live. You only have to live as all the right-minded live in any of the circles you frequent. Once they are right-minded and right-living they can label themselves anything. Of a friend of mine who called himself an atheist I have often said that he was one of the two or three really good Christians whom I knew. That this should be possible, and in millions and millions of cases it is possible, is due to the work of the Churches of Christ.

I said in the beginning that men gave up their Faith and, as far as I could see, were none the worse for it. That is because they always retained the Eternal Good. Giving up a conventional Faith they retained the real one. They retained it with all sorts of variations, negligences, and mistakes, but in the main line of their conduct the decency and honour inseparable from Faith in its reality was a lasting fact. You might say that the whole system of credit, that is, trust in honesty and good intention, on which the world subsists to-day is

due to the teaching of religion, either Christian or of some other kind. With us it is due to the Churches. Without them we should still be robbing each other and cutting each other's throats even more barbarously than now. Without them those of us who contemn and condemn them would lack the amenities we can claim even in our present system of semi-civilization.

Without them I for one should have no definition of Faith, and no idea whatever of what constitutes Success. Though what I have said on these subjects would be too humble and humdrum for the Churches, nevertheless, without their assistance, I could not have thought it out. Just to keep the inner life free from being choked by the silt of small transgressions—just to attain to the habit of instant association with God—just to make worship what the word implies, the effort to be worthy—just to work, to work hard and lovingly, to work with work as almost my first mission upon earth—just to lay my work before God as done in imitation of Him to the best of a capricious ability as His own

work, confident that He will crown the issue—this would not be spectacular or ecstatic enough for the Churches, which demand that in a leap I penetrate into the profoundest mysteries of God. But I do what I can, and whatever in it may be good I owe to the Churches, under God. Taking their teachings I make what is for me the best of them, but I could have done nothing without their inspiration first of all.

That is basic. It is basic for those who give up the Churches as for those who stay within them. We can never get away from it because to do so would mean getting away from the Eternal Good. That they hand on to us, with much else that is unessential and sometimes, in my opinion, puerile. But in the rubble there is gold far from difficult to find.

IX

Among the letters I receive from unknown correspondents are many which contain the statement, "Brought up in an orthodox church I left it because I was dissatisfied." As to this

I have nothing to say, but I often wonder if the writers of such lines understand how deeply they are indebted to that which they have left behind. Even when they consider the Church in question and find it wanting, it is from that very Church that they have received the instruction enabling them to do so. Making what seems to them progress, the impulse to make it comes from the very source of which they have learned to disapprove.

This question of separating ourselves from the Churches in which we have been brought up, or which we have adopted, seems to me more serious than some of us suppose. It is not wholly, as we generally think, a matter of individual taste. It has a corporate, a communal aspect. The Churches form the only body of which the purpose is to keep the Eternal Good a living thing in the world. Turning our backs on them, we turn our backs on this vital effort, in the only form in which it is made a fixed intention. By just so much we weaken it. The campaign to forward it may not be

carried on precisely to our liking, but there are many other things of which this can be said but to which, none the less, we feel it our duty to be loyal. I admit that services are often wearisome, that the phrases are worn, that the choirs whether good or bad are dreadful, that the unhappy clergy, with their untrained diction rendering unintelligible the sublimest passages of Scripture, are frequently feeble and inept. But these are only the externals. Experience proves that the Eternal Good seeps through them all in spite of the poverty of the agencies. There is some of this Eternal Good in the world, one might even say a good deal of it. Not one of us but has a little in himself. If all of us were to abandon the Churches, the mass of paganism already menacing would quickly overwhelm us.

Personally I go regularly to church, though I am frank enough to confess that I often find it difficult. I often find myself coming away complaining that it has not done me any good. But on second thoughts I see that I have done a

little good simply by having been there. I have done what I could, on that one occasion at least, to uphold a great tradition. It is not the tradition of this Church or of that; it goes much farther back. It goes back to those prehistoric days of which no one was ever able to make a record, when man first began to grope after God, and God revealed Himself to the degree in which man could assimilate the knowledge. That process is always going on. It is never accomplished. From generation to generation, from year to year, we are learning to know a little more of God, and that is the movement in which the Churches are engaged.

From my point of view the Churches becloud that Vision of God by their many complexities, and with no necessity for doing so. On the other hand, they do not becloud it so much as science, education, art, literature, politics, or commerce. If there is a light they keep it burning. They have kept it burning when without them it would have gone out. They are holding it up when no one else on earth

thinks of doing so. It is that noble act which we support by the prosaic process of what we call "going to church." The external methods, though now so often a thorn in the flesh, will one day pass, while the light behind will burn on. It is for that, it seems to me, that on Sunday I put a spur upon myself and join the vast body which all the world over is loyal to the same tradition. Trivialities must not irk me; the clergyman's voice must not grate upon my ear; the choir is not to irritate me by either its beauty or its blatancy; the worn phrases must contain as much as possible of the life that once was in them. The purpose to be served is of such tremendous moment that externals ought not to be allowed to interfere.

Nor must it ever be forgotten that the externals involve no more than men of partly developed capacity. Those who direct the Churches, from the Pope of Rome down to the poorest little darky preacher, are not more fledged than we are ourselves. They are of their time, and the time is one of relatively

slight advance. In the struggle upward we have reached no mighty altitude; we have come but a little way. The most that can be said of it is that we are doing our best. It is by our best that, from many points of view, we must be judged. All the great departments of human life are making experiments and mistakes; revising this year what they preached as gospel last. To everything else we allow this liberty, and yet deny it to the Churches. That we do so is partly the Churches' fault in that they have claimed to know the final truth from the beginning. But there again we have the error of undeveloped man, and if we feel that we ourselves have passed beyond it, it is all the more our duty to be indulgent. We ourselves, as detached individuals, can never guard the treasure of Eternal Good, since we come and go. The Churches never go. In one form or another they are permanent. Deserting them, we desert the tradition handed in by men sinful, and sometimes stupid, from the immemorial ages, but nevertheless handed on. It has

broadened and deepened and heightened as the generations have done their work upon it till it was perfected by Jesus Christ. But that it was perfected by Him does not mean that it is perfected in us. That is the task of the future, and for carrying it out I know nothing but co-operation with the Churches.

X

Therefore, in my conception of Success, I can see no separation from such truth as the past has bequeathed us and the present is working on. The lonely pilgrim who tries to be right in conduct, in prayer, in worship, and in work, will doubtless accomplish much; but he will accomplish more when he associates himself with those who are doing likewise. By this I do not of necessity mean personal association, which, in America especially, often perverts the true use of Churches. I mean nothing in the way of oyster socials or pink teas, whatever they may be. Of all the mean ways of going to a church that of seeking recognition, or hoping to be

spoken to, is probably the meanest. It may lead to what I have heard called "mere church acquaintanceship," but it will not lead to much more. What I have in mind is simple, silent, manly, womanly, a coöperation of presence rather than of intercourse, having only the end of the Eternal Good in view.

I will not dogmatize. I will not say that there can be no Success without it, since I do not believe anything of the kind. I do believe, however, that with it Success will be larger. If we are strong we shall become stronger. If we lack presence we shall gain in personality. In living with a great tradition, even a social tradition, there is always an enhancement of dignity. In this the association is with the Father.

For, in a word, that is what it amounts to. It is another mode of Faith. One has Faith that the Churches, imperfect as they are, will be more and more effectually the instruments of the Eternal Good. God Who, in spite of all our sins and failures, helps us as individuals

will in the same way help them as bodies corporate. As it is, in their external organizations, they reflect our own defects, our ambition, our pride, our arrogance, our foolishness, and the something grotesque of which we all partake. Nevertheless, like ourselves, they are upward bound. They are not to be judged by either the present or the past, since they will do their best work in the future. But to have a future they must be helped to live on, and they cannot live on if too many of us leave them in the lurch.

I shall not be suspected of trying to lay down a law. Those who disagree with me have all the right to do so. I merely feel that for Success to be broad our interests must be broad; we must take a broad view of our duties. The rich nature is always liberal, and if the nature is not already rich the effort to be liberal will make it so. With a strong infusion of what seem to many of us puerilities, the Churches, nevertheless, stand for the best we know in human life. In coöperation with them some at least of what is best is shed upon ourselves.

That they attract in such large numbers the narrow, the bigoted, the sour-faced, is not their fault. Even these presumably are struggling upward, while some of them may have passed us, notwithstanding our superiority, on that toilsome way. In any case, they are not our business. In our effort at Success our business is to be identified with what is best; and though what is best has many aspects, and science, art, literature, and other departments of human endeavour are all part of it, a special best is, in my judgment, found in the Churches which go by the name of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LIGHTS ALONG THE WAY AND THE PINNACLE OF SUCCESS

I

IN WHAT I have been trying to say I shall have failed if I have not made it clear that Success lies in a certain relation to one's fellow men. I must work for them as they have worked for me. From that work I may receive money and position, or I may receive other things. It will depend on the nature of the work. Some kinds of work tend to bring money, others get their reward in a decent living, with honour and respect. To work in relation with the supremely working Father is to preclude failure, and expand the character to its utmost.

For some years this was nearly enough for me.

I use the word "nearly" because there was always a sense of something lacking, though I didn't know what it was. It was an incompleteness which, as long as I had many new thoughts to occupy my mind, did not trouble me; but the trouble grew. In the end I was able to make of it a kind of diagnosis.

My simple and humdrum plan of life contained no explicit statement—to myself, that is of what to me is one of the two or three great concepts ever formed in the mind of man, that of human brotherhood. That I must work for others as others worked for me was clear enough; that I should get a reward was also clear; but I did not see much beyond the reward. That is to say, I was working for myself. I was working for others only *because* they had worked for me, and would probably not have done it otherwise. A certain responsibility was lacking, a certain caring whether others got what they wanted or not. If my reward, with my degree of Success, was forthcoming, it was practically all I asked.

How it came to me that I had little or no sense of human brotherhood I do not remember. What I do remember is that it then became plain to me that many of my limitations were due to this lack. I was narrower than I need have been. I do not mean to say that I am not always narrow, but I was narrower then than I am now. I suppose that the concept of human brotherhood is the largest ideal we have on earth. It is larger than anything political, however comprehensive, larger than anything ecclesiastical, however imbued with the hope of universal salvation. It is, in fact, so large that in our present undeveloped state it seems to lie altogether outside our grasp. We have talked about it for two thousand years, and at the end of two thousand years we are no nearer to carrying it out than we were at the beginning.

So that, seeing it was what I lacked, my first sensation was one of hopelessness. What was the good of having a sense of the brotherhood of man when no such brotherhood existed? It

did not exist between nations; it did not exist in any nation within itself; it did not exist even within the Churches, with whom, I think, the idea originated first. Merely to mention the word was to have it applied to the Locomotive Engineers. Of brotherhood they seemed to have a monopoly, at least in name, unless I include some of the secret societies. But even the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the secret societies are not universal, and it was toward the universal that my spirit was set.

II

I was about to put the conception aside as one of which the fulfilment was reserved for a more advanced stage of our existence when somehow the idea slipped into my mind that if for me there was ever to be such a thing as human brotherhood it must begin within myself. I was not to wait till the nations or the Churches put it into general operation, sweeping me into it. It was before everything else a question for the individual. It was not so much a matter of

world-wide organization as of private practice. Brotherhood comes rather from acting the part of a brother to someone else than from expecting someone else to act the part of a brother to oneself.

But here again we are up against great difficulties. The world is large; there are a great many people in it; there is a great deal of trouble, sorrow, poverty, of all kinds. Even were one a professional worker in what we are pleased to call the slums, only one case in millions would come our way. It is so much for the individual, with the best wishes and intentions, to try to cope with. Before the vastness of the field of necessity one is dazed. The more one wins a little Success the more one is moved at the thought of those who never get any, or who, having got it, get it with something which turns the bread bitter in the mouth, while the joy is poisoned in the heart. But the mass of it! The appalling number of those with whom the essential has gone wrong! Supposing that one has something with which to meet and

soothe even a little of it, the question is as to where and how to begin.

It is not as if most people ran about with their needs and exposed them, as Neapolitan beggars used to expose their deformities. On the contrary, they hide them away. They are silent about them. If you interfere ever so tactfully they are often sensitive and hurt. You do more harm than good. What, then, is the use of your individual feeling of brotherhood when so little can come of it? It is like having in your pocket millions of money in a coinage not accepted by the world.

III

At this spot I floundered for not a little time. Faith and Success, in as far as one attained to them, seemed to lead one not much farther than oneself. You did your work and you got your pay. That was good as far as it went, and yet there seemed to be a void in front of it. There was an absence of the sense of being knitted up with the mighty body of humankind which,

though to some it may seem fanciful, is to me an important part of existence.

Then it happened that one day I was trying to think out the subject of what, after all, brotherhood consists in. Suddenly I saw that it was first of all in being brother to the brother of your own flesh and blood. There was where all the tremendous scheme of universal brotherhood began. Like so many other things, it began at home. If it didn't begin at home it never began at all. You could not reach the universal till you reached what was close at hand. After that you went a little farther out to the circle of your friends and acquaintances; after that farther still if you had the opportunity; but you started at the cradle first.

Not for nothing, I then began to see, did the compiler of the Ten Commandments begin the code which gives us our duty toward man with the words, "Honour thy father and thy mother," coupling the thought with the ancient ideal of Success, "that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

There could be no Success without a reasonable amount of family interdependence. To be, as far as one could, a good son and a good brother was the seed of everything successful. It was useless to preach brotherhood outside and on the grand scale unless one had, at least to some extent, practised it on the small scale in the place where it had its root.

And I need not point out that that is precisely where it comes hardest. Brothers and sisters are not those who, as the saying goes, get along best together. Even parents and children have been known to be separated by all sorts of lack of sympathy. Instances are common of brothers and sisters, and sometimes of parents and children, who have quarrelled to the breaking point.

It is just here that the man or woman of good intention finds a chance. Family life has at least the advantage that in it there are no pretences to keep up. All those things as to which the members of a family are reticent with outsiders, and of which they are sometimes a little

ashamed, can be discussed with the bars down. That in itself is more of a relief than we commonly suppose. It lets out something within us which is otherwise suppressed, with the discomfort that suppression generally breeds. It also affords an occasion for the well-meaning brother or sister to bring about sympathy and peace should there happen to be estrangement.

But I am not writing a handbook of domestic diplomacy. All I mean to say is that where brotherhood is in question the family is our field of action first of all. It is possible that we are born into families in order to learn how to deal with little groups before we have to handle big ones. Any household you may choose is an epitome of human society in general while it has in addition a degree of intimacy which society in general has not. The community of interests is as nearly complete as can well be brought about. The friction generated is a wholesome friction, rubbing off the sharp angles of character. If there was ever a school in which to learn the strategy, tact, and dis-

cretion necessary to Success it is that in which parents and children, brothers and sisters, make up their little commonwealth.

And this is not confined to childhood. As a rule, the opportunity is there throughout life. There are always some who survive, and as long as they do there will be family complications. We are always at school there, always with something new to face and to learn. It may even be that the older we grow the more new problems arise. There are families in which they do.

It is easy to turn one's back on them. Nothing is simpler than to say, "I don't like So-and-so—never could hit it off with him," and feel that that releases us from further responsibility. But responsibilities remain whether we shoulder them or not. They remain and impede the life, even if they never lay a touch on the conscience. Many of our troubles, if we could only trace the sequence of causes and effects, would probably hark back to events to which we never gave a thought. We can

never, I am convinced, wash our hands of our immediate relatives for the simple reason that we do not like them, without bringing evil on ourselves.

What our duties toward them may be I do not know. They would depend on conditions, in any case. They might easily, on sincere reflection, be to do nothing. My plea is only for sincere reflection, and it is as much for our own sakes as it is for theirs. What we give them in the way of affection, sympathy, financial help if need be, or good plain talk straight out from the shoulder if that happens to be the wise thing, will react on ourselves in benefit. We need not be interfering or superior: we need only be loving. Even if we say to ourselves afterward that we might as well not have intervened at all, it will not be so. We shall have shown our sense of the solidarity of the smaller community, and therefore have received some light on that of the larger one.

Brotherhood will have become less of a mere

name to us. We shall have begun to practise it. From the family, if it does not absorb all our efforts, we can work outward. We may not work very far, but the principle will be established. As an individual I shall know what it is in reality. I shall not be waiting for someone, or some group of saints or statesmen, to devise a scheme by which the subline ideal can be put into operation. I shall be doing it myself. If another is doing it, and another and another, aware of what it is they are about, corporate action, in the course of a few generations, might be established. It is certain that it will never be established by politics, according to the hopes of socialists and communists. Brotherhood by law would not be brotherhood. If it cannot come by love it will not come at all; and if it is to come by love it must come through the practical working of individuals. It is experimental, empirical. It must be extended by degrees. There is no other way, and that way is in the hands of each of us.

IV

Success, then, as I have tried to show, is a wider thing than we commonly assume, and wider far than the process of making money, which is all the meaning given to the word in our popular magazines. I also give that meaning to the word, but only as one among a number. Many are successful who have no invested savings, and possibly no bank accounts. It is only from one point of view that money enters into it at all. The entire substance of Success will be found in the degree to which we struggle upward. Since that would seem to be the purpose of our passage through this phase of life, the higher we climb and the more widely in character and sympathy we are able to expand, the better we shall meet all the tests of Success. Professional Success, good work of any kind from that of the servant to that of the bishop, the king, or the president, must of necessity count high, since it is commonly the medium through which our development finds its way. That is

all I have to say about it till we come to Faith.

V

If it were not for Faith I do not see how we could dream of this kind of Success in any way. It is so big and difficult that without the coöperation with a Power mightier than our own we should sink into a slough of helplessness. Faith is the means by which we dare to utilize that Power. It is the messenger we send in search of it. It brings it back to us. But we can neither send it out nor have it bring back anything unless we have had some preparation for both events.

I have told what my preparation is: self-correction, prayer, worship, work. I say nothing about love, because for me love is involved in all of them. They constitute love in themselves. To my mind they cover all the ground, but I wish they were easier.

They are hard. They are perhaps elaborate. If I knew of a simpler way I would cheerfully say so, but others may. I repeat that I am not giving my method as the only method, but as

the only one I know. Though I have never been able to discover it, something less cumbersome may be found within the Churches. At any rate, I do not, I think, incur the displeasure of the Churches, except in the fact that for them I do not go far enough. But that is for themselves to do. This is not a synopsis of religion, or a teaching of religion in any form. If it is anything whatever, it is a personal record of the way Faith will help one in one's work. I dare not use the word Success, because from most people's point of view such Success as I have won is so negligible. But like everybody else I have worked, and to working, my ambitions are pretty nearly limited.

Except for working, I shall not be suspected, I trust, of claiming to have carried out the conditions of what I call the preparation for Faith. Of course I have not. It is simply a man's reach exceeding his grasp. The important thing is the aim.

As for the accomplishment, I take great comfort from a line in one of the psalms: "Pour out

your hearts before Him, for God is our Hope." Pour out your hearts before Him, with all that is in them, all that you are ashamed of, all that you are afraid of, all that you long for, all that you work for, all that you have failed in, for God is our Hope. It is a mingled treasure of worthlessness and gold, but pour it out. He will take it for what it is worth, and it will probably be worth much.

For it is out of those hearts that Faith rises, pure and strong. Taking what is there such as it is, and just as it is, it dares to seek for God's coöperation. It dares because it is confident. It dares because with an assurance for which we have no other faculty it knows God. It makes Him known to us. It gives us courage. It imparts to us some of its own audacity to enter the Holy of Holies.

And it is our own. It is generated by ourselves. It is not in Heaven that someone should go and bring it down; neither is it beyond the sea that someone should go and bring it over. We who have made such little progress in the

struggle upward from the slime have developed this wondrous thing which stands unabashed before the Most High. Standing unabashed before the Most High it still is with us in our most commonplace needs, the needs of the mother with her baby, the needs of the servant at the stove, the needs of the young man in the office, the needs of the journeyman at the bench, the needs of the farmer in the field, the needs of the writer, the painter, the priest, the teamster, the newspaper reporter, the sailor and the saint. Faith is with everyone striving for Success in whatever form. Forms vary. They are higher and lower; they are broader and narrower. They are what the individual craves for and makes of them. To Faith it is all one. Whatever the kind of effort Faith meets us in it, taking it as it is, taking us as we are, showing us how to find our way out by striving together with God.

THE END

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